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THE BRITISH PAINTERS.

VOL. III.

THE LIVES

OF THE MOST

EMINENT BRITISH PAINTERS

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

REVISED EDITION.

ANNOTATED AND CONTINUED TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY MRS. CHARLES HEATON.

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VOL. III.

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LIVES

OF

THE BRITISH PAINTERS.

BEAUMONT.

WHEN Voltaire called on Congreve, he addressed him as a dramatist of wit and imagination. "I am not an author, sir," said the retired poet; "I am a gentleman." —"Sir," replied the sarcastic Frenchman, "had you been but a gentleman, I should not have visited you." The weakness thus rebuked is a general one, but not universal; and among the exceptions I know few more brilliant than the person of whose life and talents I am now about to write; he adorned the gentleman with the artist, and the artist with the gentleman, and stood high in the ranks both of genius and courtesy.

Sir George Howland Beaumont, Baronet, was born on the 6th of November, 1753; his father died whilst he was yet a child, and left him to the care of his mother, a lady of taste and talent.[1] Her maiden name was Rachel Howland: some property it seems came into the family through the marriage, as her son took her name; but no alliance could add to the dignity of his paternal descent. Among his ancestors he could point to Bohemond, Prince of Antioch, son of Robert Guiscard, who shook the throne of the Emperor of Constantinople, in the battles of Durazzo and Larissa, and afterwards planted with Godfrey of

[1] He succeeded to the Baronetcy in 1762, and was educated at Eton and Oxford.—Ed.

Bouillon, the Cross of the Franks on the walls of Jerusalem. This high descent connects the house of Beaumont with the royal families of France and England. His lineage has other claims to our attention; and to this Wordsworth alludes, when, in the dedication of his poems to Sir George, he says—"Several of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious poets of your name and family who were born in that neighbourhood, and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace-Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood." In one of his Coleorton inscriptions the poet speaks still more plainly:—

> "Here may some painter sit in future days,
> Some future poet meditate his lays;
> Not mindless of that distant age renown'd,
> When inspiration hover'd o'er this ground—
> The haunt of him who sang how spear and shield
> In civil conflict met on Bosworth Field,
> And of that famous youth full soon removed
> From earth; perhaps by Shakespeare's self approved,
> Fletcher's associate, Jonson's friend beloved."

He unites name, birth, and residence, in another poem:—

> "There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,
> Did Francis Beaumont sport—an eager child;
> There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,
> Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks,
> Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
> Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams."

Sir George was educated at Eton; where to classic knowledge he united the art of drawing: a book containing his boyish attempts is still extant. He made himself familiar with Greek and Roman lore, and with English dramatic poetry. Indeed, he grew so fond of Shakespeare, that he committed some whole plays to memory; and occasionally showed, on the boards of a private theatre, that he could represent, as well as understand and feel, the wit and passion of his favourite. He excelled so much in the personation of various characters, serious as well as gay, that

friends were not wanting who thought he more than approached Garrick. His mother observed the progress of her son in learning and taste with no little pleasure; her powers of mind were such, that she could direct as well as appreciate his studies; and she lived to see him at the head, not of fashion, but of taste, and acknowledged not only a fine judge, but a skilful master in the art of painting. Another person of equal merit was admitted to a share of his confidence and his pursuits. One evening, while Sir George was acting in private theatricals at North Aston, he observed a young lady of great beauty amongst the auditors, who seemed much moved with the performance: on inquiring, he found that she was Margaret Willes, grand-daughter of Lord Chief Justice Willes, and resided with her father at Astrop. On being introduced to her, he found that her taste in all things nearly resembled his own; that she was a lover of painting, a greater lover of poetry: and that her taste was naturally excellent, and improved by an education at once elegant and pious. He married her in the year 1784; and an intercourse of forty years and upwards only served to prove how worthy she was of his love. The portraits of the bride and bridegroom were painted by their friend Sir Joshua Reynolds. Sir George has the look of an accomplished gentleman; his lady unites sense to loveliness.

Soon after his marriage, he made with Lady Beaumont the tour of Italy.[1] It was during this journey that he became a painter. He had formerly made drawings to fill up those hours of leisure which the opulent have at their disposal; having done what he wished them to do, they were thrown aside and forgotten. In the land of painters he resumed the pencil, made studies of scenes from nature, and from Claude and the chief masters of the calling. On finding his hand and eye improving by practice, and the poetic spirit of the scene becoming more and more visible in his attempts, he persisted till he had painted a land-

[1] This tour was made in 1782; therefore, if Lady Beaumont went with him, he must have been married before 1784. All other authorities, indeed, give the date of his marriage as 1778.—Ed.

scape, in which, it is said, something both of Italy and England appeared.[1]

Of Wilson, who died in 1782, Sir George was a great admirer; his admiration, however, was not of the blind sort; he felt his extraordinary merits, but perceived his defects. "I think it will be allowed," he thus writes to a friend, "that the pictures on which Wilson's high reputation is founded are not very numerous; whatever may have been the cause, it is certain he did not long possess that vigour of mind and hand which characterizes the 'Niobe.' To the last, indeed, and in the weakest of his productions, a fine taste for lines and a classical feeling is discoverable, which must for ever give them a value in the opinions of those who are capable of relishing beauties of this kind. For my own part, I have no hesitation, as far as my own judgment goes, to place him at the head of the landscape painters of this country. His sole rival is Gainsborough: and if it be allowed, as I think it must, that he had a finer and higher relish for colour, or, in the technical term, a better painter's eye, than Wilson; on the other hand, Wilson was far his superior in elevation of thought and dignity of composition. Both were poets; and, to me, 'The Bard of Gray,' and his 'Elegy in the Country Churchyard,' are so descriptive of their different lines, that I should certainly have commissioned Wilson to paint a subject from the first, and Gainsborough one from the latter: and if I am correct in this opinion, the superior popularity of Gainsborough cannot surprise us; since, for one person capable of relishing the sublime, there are thousands who admire the rural and the beautiful, especially when set off by such fascinating spirit and splendour of colour as we see in the best works of Gainsborough."

"That Wilson," continues Sir George, "had great faults, must be granted: his subjects are sometimes

[1] According to another account, Sir George had painted scenes both from the field and from the gallery before his visit to Italy; it is certain that, from his youth up, he was well known to the first artists of the age for taste, if not for skill; and that he loved to be in their company and to talk of the art which they professed.

meagre, as in the 'Ceyx;' and sometimes too artificial, and decidedly *composition;* and in producing what he called hollowness, or space, he frequently divided the distances, so that they had too much the appearance of cut scenery at the theatre. His pencil, although feeble and negligent in his decline, is, in his best works, firm, bold, and decisive. I do not conceive his colouring to be his prime excellence; yet it is frequently sweet and airy, solemn and grand, as the subject required, and seldom or never out of harmony."

On his return from abroad, Sir George spoke with much freedom of the excellences and defects of the great masters of Flanders and Italy: this was reckoned heresy by some of the English painters; and by none more than by Reynolds, who was never willing to see anything but perfection in the conceptions of Michael Angelo and the colouring of Titian. It is true that Beaumont was not a professor of the science and mystery of art; he belonged to no school of painting, and was not, therefore, interested in maintaining the infallibility of any master at home or abroad; but it is also true that his fine education, and dignity of mind, raised him above all such prejudices of judgment, and made him one of the truest critics on art of his time.

He now began to be talked of as a landscape-painter; as one who delighted in classic beauty of design, and to the clear air and sunshine of Claude desired to unite a certain poetic loftiness of conception, such as was to be found in the best pieces of Wilson. That he had talent for all this, no one who knew him doubted; but wealth stood in the way to fame. Many noble spirits have been depressed by poverty; but ease and opulence have been not less injurious to others, and not a few have been content to enjoy the company of the heirs of fame, who, if they had been forced to "lead laborious days," might have earned places in the first ranks for themselves.

Sir George, in his conversations and letters, generally introduced something about the art he loved; and even in the shortest note he would slip in an anecdote, personal or professional, of Wilson, of Claude, of Reynolds, or Gainsborough. "My friend, Sir Joshua," he thus writes to one

of the brethren, "was full as warm in his admiration of Claude as myself; yet I am convinced, from his backgrounds, and a few essays, that, had he practised himself, his mode of composition would have been very different, though I verily believe he would have been one of the finest landscape-painters that ever existed. As to Wilson, he was such an enthusiast, that he would not suffer Claude to be criticized in any degree. I remember receiving a reprimand from him for finding fault with his favourite, though I qualified my observation by saying, what I really thought, that Wilson was a much better painter himself. 'I tell you what,' said he, 'all I know of the matter I learnt from Claude, who is the only person that ever could paint fine weather and Italian skies; and if you will study him, and get acquainted with him, you will be of the same opinion. There is one picture of his' (and I think he named 'The Doria Claude' with the temple) 'which makes my heart ache; I shall never paint such a picture as that, were I to live a thousand years.' Wilson's opinion of Claude's figures was, that they were almost always elegantly conceived, being frequently taken from the antique, sometimes very well drawn, and always well coloured and in their proper places. I think his etchings are not to be ranked with his pictures: but why should my opinion of Claude affect your principles or practice; the field of art is immense, and there is ample space for talents to exert themselves in every direction; it is impossible—and I think we should rejoice that it is so—to confine genius to one system, however excellent it may be."

Though his chief pleasure lay in painting, and in the company of such men as Reynolds, Gainsborough, and West; and his journeys were, generally, little farther than from London to Coleorton, and from Coleorton back to London, he was not insensible to the charms of other society and other scenes. The image of liberty which the French revolutionists of 1790 commanded all nations to fall down and worship, allured him over to France, and he walked, with the carelessness of an Englishman, about the streets of Paris, taking a look now at a gallery of pictures, now at the National Assembly, or the Jacobin Club, of

which his acquaintance, David, the painter, was a too active member. While Sir George was one day walking with Lord Beverley, the "sovereign people" came forth and seized a victim, whom they hurried off to execute *à la lanterne*: the two Englishmen, having never seen before such proceedings, gazed on the victim with looks of astonishment and horror: but looks were understood as well as words and deeds by the friends of liberty; and Sir George and his companion were in a fair way of being hanged as unceremoniously as the man they pitied, when a sympathizing citizen fixed a tricoloured cockade in their hats, and aided their escape. Sir George loved liberty, but not such liberty as this: he set a guard upon his looks, and took the first opportunity of returning to his native land. I have not heard that he profited as a painter by his brief journey.

As soon as he learned to paint, Sir George began to form a collection of the drawings of Wilson, Gilpin, Hearne, Girtin, Dance, and others. A gallery of fine paintings required more expense: besides, the war with France shut us out from the great Italian collections, and an Englishman ran the double chance of paying an enormous price, and obtaining a spurious article: the knowledge and perseverance of Sir George enabled him, however, to overcome or avoid all these difficulties. He was aware of the frauds of the picture-dealers, who keep on hand ready-made Claudes, Poussins, and Cuyps, for all lovers of landscape, some of which are copied with a skill, and smoked into a look of other times, that may deceive the wisest. The fruit of many years' research was one Poussin, four Claudes, one Canaletti, one Rubens, and two Rembrandts; but then they were all of first-rate excellence. To these he added two Wilsons, one Reynolds, one West, and one Wilkie. He loved to gaze on them by the hour; and to show their beauties to all lovers of art. He did not collect them as a miser, to hide them from the world, and doat on them in the dark. So far did he carry his admiration of Claude, that it amounted almost to a passion: the "Narcissus," by that great master, he commonly carried with him like a household god, when he went to Coleorton, and brought it

back to its place when winter recalled him to London. He resolved, too, not to trust his treasures to the uncertain taste of the future heirs of his line: he had long privately resolved to leave them to the nation; but even this he was unwilling to do, unless he could ensure them a safe and honoured sanctuary. This required time and well-used opportunity to bring about: he never lost sight of it, however, and lived to see it accomplished.

No one knew better than Sir George, the influence which fine collections of works of genius exercise over the taste of the community at large, as well as the progress of students in art. To this we owe his unwearied solicitude about the founding of a national gallery, and his desire that a complete collection of the works of Reynolds should be exhibited to the country. "It was with Sir George," says one of his relatives, "that the idea of exhibiting Sir Joshua's pictures originated: in this he was warmly aided by Lord Melville, and encouraged by King George IV. It is right to name those who exerted themselves in the cause of art; by exertion, I do not mean a cold approbation, and a diplomatic sort of encouragement, such as well-bred courtesy bestows, but I mean that enthusiastic exertion which is directed by an ardent heart and a good taste, and is not easily daunted by the well-bred incivilities of indifference. No one knew better than Sir George who were the hollow advocates of art, and who were the sincere ones; and it was pleasant to hear him, in his dry, ironical way, discourse of the pretended patrons of sculpture and painting. His fine education and good breeding enabled him to draw the portraits of those false Duessas with the nicest delicacy; but he did this without any ill-nature, and more in sorrow than in resentment. He sometimes did not spare artists themselves, whose little jealousies and party bickerings he held injurious to the dignity of art, and to the title of gentlemen."

He loved to keep up, but adorn, the old state of the Beaumonts; though his house in Grosvenor Square was like other dwellings outwardly, the interior was, in fact, a rich museum of books and paintings. Everywhere his good taste and good sense were visible: he had no collec-

tions of shells, and spars, and chips of curious stones, and specimens of red and blue clay, bits of bone, and cracked porringers, and other matters, old and filthy, and far-fetched: his walls were covered with the works of Wilson, and Claude, and Reynolds; among them were one or two of his own landscapes, in which critics and artists perceived much that was imaginative and picturesque. There were others, whose admiration of the works of Sir George was neither warm nor high; who, nevertheless, acknowledged the presence of taste and skill in his productions: and there were visitors of literary name, whom the liking of Lady Beaumont for whatever was poetic attracted to her side; she was seldom without the company of authors of eminence.

When autumn called Sir George into the country, he found out an employment which required patience as well as taste. About the year 1800, he dipt his hands in mortar, and never had them wholly clean for the rest of his life. Having resolved to rebuild Coleorton Hall, in Leicestershire, he called in the aid of Dance, the architect; but in laying out the lawns, and beautifying the grounds, he trusted to his own skill in landscape; and it must be owned that he embellished nature, and added a new charm to the groves, the fountains, and the hills. When Beaumont planted a tree on a favourite spot, Wordsworth was ready to record the circumstance in verse; and when he raised an altar by wood or dale, the poet signalized it in song. There were, however, other, and better, points in his Coleorton landscape than trees and altars: the happiness of his people, and the condition of their cots and villages, got as much of his attention as his new hall, or its surrounding scenery. It was his pleasure to be acquainted with all who lived under his protection: and comfortable homes, and happy tenants, spoke of a wise as well as an indulgent master.

When the Continent at length grew calm, after the storms of Leipsic and Waterloo, swarms of our artists hurried to visit foreign galleries, so long excluded from their view. Among these was Sir George Beaumont. He went to Switzerland in 1819, and to Italy in 1822. For

what he did there we have his own words. "I have made," he thus wrote to his friend Chantrey, "two purchases since I have been at Rome: one is a bas-relief by Michael Angelo; the subject a 'Virgin,' a 'St. John,' and an 'Infant Christ.'[1] St. John is presenting a dove to the child Jesus, who shrinks from it, and shelters himself in the arms of his mother, who seems gently reproving St. John for his hastiness, and putting him back with her hand. The child is finished, and the mother in great part: the St. John is only sketched, but in a most masterly style. The proofs of its authenticity, exclusive of its merit, are incontestible: Canova, with his usual kindness, superintended the packing; it is directed, through the Custom House, to Grosvenor Square; and I wish it not to be seen by any one till my return, unless you yourself are sufficiently interested in it to open it and look at it. The other case contains a work of certainly a very different calibre, yet I think interesting, and of considerable merit in its way. It is a view of the Colonna Gallery, with all the pictures which were hanging in it at the time it was painted, by P. Panini, for the Cardinal Colonna. Panini, although not to be trusted out of doors, painted interiors with great skill; as the two pictures at Lord Abercorn's at the Priory of St. Peter's and St. Paul's bear witness. This, Canova tells me, was always considered his masterpiece: at any rate, it is a very amusing picture, and many of the copies very good, particularly the 'Velasquez,' now at Lord Grosvenor's. We are delighted here: the weather is beautiful; such as we dream of when we dream of other worlds." Of the Michael Angelo group, Sir George says to Chantrey, in another letter,—"One would almost imagine Sir Joshua had seen it: the child has much of that transient grace so common to children, the hitting of which he calls shooting flying." There is a resemblance between that in marble and the "Holy Family" of Rey-

[1] This beautiful little sketch in marble was presented to the Royal Academy, and now hangs, together with some other of the treasures belonging to the Royal Academy, in the small room beyond the Diploma Gallery, in Burlington House. Its authenticity is admitted by several of Michel Angelo's latest critics.—ED.

nolds, too close to be accidental: the postures of the St. John and the Infant Jesus in both are nearly similar. "I had always," says Sir George, "a veneration for Michael Angelo; but this visit has raised him still higher in my opinion. I used to think Sir Joshua's comparison of him to Homer, and Raphael to Virgil, a little too strong; but now I am, to say the least, in doubt. At any rate, he is himself alone." In the same letter, Sir George records his opinion of another artist. "I have given," he says, "a commission to Gibson: he seems to me to have great merit; and his composition, I think, will please you: he is modest and assiduous, with much taste; and, I think, will do us great credit." The group from the chisel of Gibson was sent to Coleorton Hall: the Michael Angelo marble was presented to the Royal Academy.

One of the objects which Sir George had most at heart, was the establishment of a national gallery for paintings. From the year 1818 to 1824, he held many conversations with men of taste and influence on the subject, and more particularly with the Hon. George Agar Ellis, now Lord Dover,—who concurred in its expediency, and urged it publicly in the House of Commons, and privately to the ministers, especially Lord Liverpool. "Assure the Government," said Sir George, "that I will give my own pictures to the nation, as soon as there is a proper place allotted for their reception." This splendid bribe, no doubt, had due weight: Lord Liverpool listened with a favourable ear to the subject; approved of a national gallery, as beneficial to art, and worthy of the country; but shook his head, and hesitated at the expense: the Earl of Aberdeen and Lord Farnborough were moved to aid in the attempt: much was said, and something promised: still nothing was done. The death of Mr. Angerstein, and the dread that his collection might go to the King of Bavaria, or the Emperor of Russia, or else be locked up at home by some churlish purchaser, quickened the slow and confirmed the wavering.

When these rumours were afloat, Sir George was not idle. "You have proved yourself," he thus wrote to Lord Dover, "so sincere a friend to the arts, that I am sure you must have heard the report that Lord Hertford is in

treaty, and likely to purchase, Angerstein's pictures; but that if he finds the nation will buy them, he will give up his claim. I hope the latter part of the report is true, and that the country will purchase. You manifested such sincere and laudable zeal to bring this about, that I have great hopes you will carry your point: certainly, I would rather see them in the hands of his Lordship, than have them lost to the country; but I would rather see them in the Museum, than in the possession of any individual, however respectable in rank or taste; because taste is not inherited, and there are few families in which it succeeds for three generations. My idea, therefore, is, that the few examples which remain perfect can never be so safe as under the guardianship of a body which never dies; and I see every year such proofs of the carelessness with which people suffer these inestimable relics to be rubbed, scraped, and polished as if they were their family plate, that I verily believe, if they do not find some safe asylum, in another half century little more will be left than the bare canvasses."

Such were the pithy words of Sir George Beaumont in November, 1823; he had soon occasion to write with less doubt or despondency: he thus addresses Lord Dover:— "Our friend Knight has informed me that Parliament has resolved upon the purchase of the Angerstein collection; and as I shall always consider the public greatly indebted to your exertions, I hope you will pardon my troubling you with my congratulations. By easy access to such works of art, the public taste must improve, which I think the grand desideratum; for when the time shall come when bad pictures, or even works of mediocrity, shall be neglected, and excellence never passed over, my opinion is, we shall have fewer painters, and better pictures. I think the public already begin to feel works of art are not merely toys for connoisseurs, but solid objects of concern to the nation; and those who consider it in the narrowest point of view, will perceive that works of high excellence pay ample interest for the money they cost. My belief is, that the Apollo, the Venus, the Laocoön, &c., are worth thousands a year to the country which possesses them."

That Sir George Beaumont was the mainspring in the establishment of the National Gallery, cannot be denied. Ministers were intimidated by the fierce attacks of the economists, and scarcely dared to propose such a measure themselves; and dreading the apathy of some, and the animosity of others, Lord Dover says he would have wanted courage to bring the subject before the Commons, had it not been for the stimulating zeal of Sir George, and the permission which he gave to announce the donation of his own magnificent collection to the country. Lord Dover was warmly aided by Mr. Stuart Wortley, now Lord Wharncliffe, Mr. Alexander Baring, Mr. William Smith of Norwich, and one or two others; the ministers began to pluck up courage: in short, the feeling of the House was in favour of something being done; and the result was the purchase of Angerstein's collection, and the establishment of a gallery, destined, I will not doubt, to become one of the noblest in the world.[1] Sir George did not long survive this consummation of many an anxious thought: his health for some years had been declining; old age, rather than illness, began to sap his strength, render his steps insecure, and impress that darkening seriousness on his brow, which indicates the consciousness of approaching death. He ventured to walk out among the scenes which he loved at Coleorton Hall; on his return, he complained of cold, was observed to shiver, and desired to be conducted to bed, from which he never again rose. He died the 7th of February, 1827; aged seventy-four years.

In person, Sir George Beaumont was tall and well-shaped; his hands were elegantly formed; and his aspect was erect and noble. There was great persuasion in his smile; his voice was gentle, and his conversation lively

[1] Sir George Beaumont has certainly raised a noble monument to himself by this work, and has earned the gratitude of the nation. In 1826, two years after the nucleus of the present collection had been gained by the purchase of Mr. Angerstein's pictures, he added to it sixteen of his own pictures, including three of his beloved Claude Lorrain landscapes, two fine Rembrandts, the Rubens "View of the Chateau de Stein," Wilson's "Niobe," and Wilkie's "Blind Fiddler."—Ed.

and instructive. Few represented so gracefully the man of birth and talents. He had all the dignity which we assign to the Sidneys and Raleighs of Elizabeth's court, united to the polished elegance of that of George IV. His knowledge was extensive, and sat gracefully on him, like an every-day dress; while his love of literature, and his admiration of the great masters in art, amounted to a passion. Nor could he conceal his liking for the stage, or his respect for its best ornaments. In one of his letters to Lord Dover, he says,—"I believe Shakspeare and Garrick are the only persons who have had it in their power to make it impossible for their admirers to decide whether their tragedy or comedy was most excellent. Garrick is before me at this instant (February, 1824); I see his quick eye, and hear the electric tones of his piercing and rapid utterance. Other actors are men of slow proceedings; but he was like the lightning. It is quite impossible to form an idea of the sensations he conveyed, whether he chilled you with horror, or convulsed you with laughter. Other actors may be compared to Otway or Rowe; but Garrick alone was Shakspeare." His sympathy was wide and far-reaching; nor did he think that to speak once to a man of genius in his life, was notice sufficient. Jackson he ever regarded as a friend, and watched his progress in art with much solicitude. "I am rejoiced," he said to Lord Dover, "to hear of the recovery of our friend Jackson, whose life is as good as his works. I have known him from his outset; and I verily believe no human being was ever more free from envy, hatred, malice, and every bad and unkind passion." His generosity was great. He aided largely in bringing forward Jackson: he countenanced Coleridge; and when his hour of adversity came, he stirred himself so that the poet obtained that pension from the Royal Society of Literature which men fondly hoped would last for life. While he lived, genius never solicited him in vain.

Of his skill as a painter, I have heard artists speak both in terms of censure and commendation. Whilst writing this imperfect sketch, I applied to one whom I reckoned equally clever and candid for his opinion; and

his evasion of the question I must consider as unfavourable. I have, however, seen many of Beaumont's landscapes; for, as he painted for several hours almost every morning, he produced numbers, some of which he gave to his friends, and others to public galleries; and, if I may venture to speak from my own feelings, I must say there is nothing of common-place in their conception. He felt the poetry of the scenes which he desired to delineate; and his notions are all akin to the lofty and the grand. An acre of meadow, a tree in the middle, a cow at its foot, and a crow on the top, was a kind of landscape which he never contemplated. He loved Claude, and imagined that he imitated him. His heart was, however, with Wilson; if he set up the former for his model, his eye wandered unconsciously to the latter. In his works, there is less of the fine fresh glow of nature than I could wish to see: there are glimpses of grandeur; indications rather than realities—the dawn, but never the full day. Yet nature had bestowed on him the soul and the eye of a fine landscape-painter scenes shone on his fancy, which his hand had not skill to embody: he saw paradise, with angels walking in glory among the trees; but the vision either passed away, or was dimly outlined on the canvas. Nature had done much for him; but fortune rendered the gift unavailing.[1] Coleorton Hall, and a good income, hindered

[1] This amiable connoisseur, who did so much for the encouragement of art in his day, is now perhaps chiefly remembered for his celebrated dictum, that "there ought to be at least one brown tree in every landscape." But though he belonged himself to the composite school of landscapists, he was able to perceive the value of truth to nature in the works of others, as his ready appreciation of many of the English painters of his day proves. He was almost the first to recognize the merit of Wilkie, and it was for him that Wilkie painted his picture of the "Blind Fiddler," afterwards presented by Sir George to the National Gallery (see "Life of Wilkie," in vol. iii.). To Haydon also he was a kind and forbearing friend, and many other of the young artists then rising into fame owed much of their success to his encouragement and approval. For it must be remembered that his judgment in matters of art was then held to be supreme. Few ventured to dispute the taste or question the knowledge of so great an authority as Sir George, and as he had decided that "a good picture, like a good fiddle, should be brown," it is to be feared that he is responsible for many a coat of brown varnish

him from ranking with the Wilsons, the Turners, and the Callcotts of his day; the duties of his station, the allurements of polished society,—in short, the want of the armed hand of poverty to thrust him into the ranks of the studious and the toiling—hindered him from acquiring that practical skill of execution, without which imagination and taste are comparatively fruitless. Yet, with all these drawbacks, he has left works which will continue his name for centuries among the lovers of the poetic and the beautiful.

The dignity of his household was well maintained after his death by his lady, who in look and taste so much resembled him, that they seemed akin. She did not long survive her bereavement. Coleorton Hall, with all its fine scenery, has passed into the hands of a kinsman, who sustains, I am glad to hear, the old state and hospitality of the gifted family of Beaumont.

added by wily dealers to the works of great masters, in order to reduce them to the hue he loved. But this mellowing process was only applied to old pictures or pictures that were intended to pass for old; it happily was not insisted upon in modern works (though a dealer once applied it to one of Constable's pictures). Besides the painters already mentioned —Jackson, Wilkie, Haydon—Sir George Beaumont was extremely kind to John Cozens, and supported this unfortunate painter for many years when he became insane. It was his delight, when he saw any of his young friends, the painters, looking ill or overworked, to ask them to stay at his seat at Coleorton, and there give them the benefit of good air and good advice. An amusing account of a visit paid by Haydon and Wilkie, in 1809, is given in Haydon's "Autobiography."—Ed.

LAWRENCE.

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, principal painter to the King, and president of the Royal Academy, was born on the 4th of May, 1769, in the parish of St. Philip and Jacob,[1] Bristol, within a few doors of the birthplace of Robert Southey, the poet. He was the youngest of sixteen children, most of whom died in infancy. His father —a Thomas also—had been educated for the law; but was either so unsteady of purpose, or so unfortunate in choice, that he became successively attorney, poetaster, spouter of odes, actor, revenue officer, farmer, and publican, and prospered in none of these callings. The artist's mother, Lucy Read, was distantly related to the house of Powis, and, therefore, of gentle blood;—an honour which Lysons, the antiquarian, would fain have established for the family of her husband also.[2]

The early history of the painter is painfully mingled with the fortunes of his father. One who saw him when young, said he was a handsome child, with large bright eyes, and a voice unusually sweet. His father, at that time landlord of the Black Bear Inn, Devizes, turned his good looks and fine voice to advantage, and taught him the art of spouting select passages from the poets, for the entertainment of customers. Before he was five years old the child had stood on a table, held out his right arm, and recited to the wondering guests some of the speeches from

[1] In a letter from Southey to Allan Cunningham, preserved among the Cunningham MSS., the parish is stated to be Christchurch, and not St. Philip. "We were born," writes Southey, "within a hundred yards of each other, but his family had left Bristol before my birth." The elder Lawrence kept an inn at the time called the White Hart.—Ed.

[2] The fact that the grandfather bestowed upon Lawrence by Lysons had no children may be taken as disproving his descent from the Lawrences of Sherdington which Lysons tried to establish.—Ed.

Milton, and sundry of the odes of Collins. He had luckily done more; he had learned to write; and moreover to draw portraits, which he did with such skill as to likeness, that his father usually introduced him to his visitors with "Gentlemen, here's my son,—will you have him recite from the poets, or take your portraits?"[1]

The recital of odes, and the sketching of likenesses, were matters unfavourable to his education, and injurious to his simplicity of manners. His father, indeed, and it is believed his mother too, instructed him privately in grammar and spelling; he was also sent, at the age of six years, to the school of Jones, near Bristol, and afterwards received lessons from Lewis, a dissenting clergyman, at Devizes: but with all these helps and snatches, his education was superficial and imperfect; he was altogether ignorant of classic lore; and his knowledge of the English poets, much as it has been praised, was really nothing uncommon. He could, however, make his little go far. "The art of repeating poetry in the happiest manner," says Williams, "continued to be one of the most pleasing traits in Sir Thomas's social, or I should say, private conversation; in mixed company he was too unostentatious to use quotations—but in small parties, or talking to his sisters, he was the most apt, succinct, and correct quoter

[1] It would seem that the innkeeper sometimes bored his customers as well as entertained them by insisting on showing off his wonderful son. Once, his biographer relates, two travellers—Lord and Lady Kenyon—arrived at the inn, tired out with a long journey. Lawrence senior immediately appeared and began to talk of his boy, saying that, though only five years old, "he could take their likenesses or repeat them any speech in Milton's 'Pandæmonium.'" The weary guests were mentally consigning both father and son to this same locality, when the boy himself entered the room riding on a stick. Their interest was at once excited by his beautiful face and hair and infantile appearance. They asked him whether he could take their portraits. "That I can," said the little Lawrence, "and very like too." He was accordingly sat upon a high chair at the table, and in half an hour produced a remarkable likeness of Lord, then Mr. Kenyon. Afterwards, on being asked whether he could take one of the lady, he offered to do so if she would turn her side-face to him, "for," he remarked, "her face is not straight." This portrait was also accomplished, and was so like that it was recognized, it is said, after twenty-five years. It was drawn in pencil, and delicately shaded.—Ed.

of English verse that could be met with." His voice was sweet and musical, and he seemed to feel deeply the sentiment of the poetry. It is wonderful, in fact, that Lawrence learned so much, and suffered so little, as he did, in the natural manliness of his character, under the system pursued by his father. All the finer sympathies of the soul are apt to be strained and injured by exposure in early youth to the transient gaze of strangers. That he was not made an utter coxcomb was not the fault of his father.

Others, however, would have been to blame had this happened. Garrick, I am told, was pleased once, during his stay at the Black Bear, to listen complacently while the boy, urged by his father, recited a long passage from Shakespeare: on the great actor's return, within the space of a month, as he alighted, he called out, "Landlord, has Tommy learned any more speeches, eh?" and ordering the boy and his tea to be taken to the summer-house in the garden, said, "Come now, my man, begin;" and when the tea and the spouting were finished, he clapped his head, and said, "Bravely done, Tommy: whether will ye be a painter or a player, eh?" The fame of the wonderful boy of Devizes reached Prince Hoare, a man of taste both in art and literature: he heard him recite Lycidas, and saw some hands and eyes of his drawing, and pronounced the latter beautiful. In the painting of the human eye Lawrence became afterwards unrivalled. Fuseli, who called our best portraits "bits of fine colour," swore passionately that the eyes of Lawrence rivalled those of Titian;—the painter's praise could go no higher. The consequence of all this notoriety was a portrait of the prodigy at the age of seven years, from the graver of Sherwin. Mrs. Siddons, it is said, added her praise to that of the multitude, and declared that his voice in recitation was harmonious, and his action just.

With admirers came advisers. The Rev. Dr. Kent proposed that a boy of such natural powers should have instructors, and, to open his mind a little, lent him Rogers's "Lives of Foreign Painters." Mr. Lawrence, however, had a notion of his own: "Genius," he said, "must be

its own instructor; reading will but lead my boy astray. I have, however, no objection to his studying from the old masters; and for that purpose he may go round and take a look at the neighbouring picture galleries." Corsham House, the seat of the Methuens, had some valuable paintings, and thither was he taken: he was lost during the tour of the apartments, and was found gazing upon a picture by Rubens. "Ah!" he sighed as he was taken away, "I shall never be able to paint like that." When he went home he endeavoured to imitate what he had seen, and painted "Christ reproving Peter;"—"Reuben's Request that Benjamin might go with his Brethren;"—and "Haman and Mordecai." These works were of course very feeble; but to the great fame which Lawrence already enjoyed we have the published testimony of the Hon. Daines Barrington:—"As I have mentioned so many proofs of early genius in children, I cannot pass unnoticed a Master Lawrence, son of an innkeeper at Devizes, in Wiltshire. This boy is now (February, 1780) nearly ten years and a half old; but at the age of nine, without the least instruction from any one, he was capable of copying historical pictures in a masterly style, and also succeeded amazingly in compositions of his own, particularly that of 'Peter denying Christ.' In about seven minutes he scarcely ever failed of drawing a strong likeness of any person present, which had generally much freedom and grace, if the subject permitted. He is likewise an excellent reader of blank verse, and will immediately convince any one that he both understands and feels the striking passages of Milton and Shakespeare."

When Lawrence was ten years old, or little more, his father removed from Devizes. He had failed in his business, and it occurred to him in his hour of distress that he might derive solid advantage from the talents of his youngest son. He made the first experiment upon Oxford. The boy had not been unnoticed by the chiefs of the University, who stopped at Devizes on their way to Bath; and when he appeared in their city, and announced himself as a portrait painter, many flocked to his easel. "He took the likenesses," says his biographer, "of the

most eminent persons then at Oxford; but his pencil was not confined to grave sexagenarians; for many of the younger nobility and gentry were anxious to have their portraits taken by the phenomenon: and the female beauty of this dignified city, and its wealthy neighbourhood, equally pressed upon his talents." Amongst these early patrons were the Bishops of Oxford and Llandaff; the Earls Bathurst and Warwick; and the Countess of Egremont.

When the Oxford harvest was reaped and gleaned, the Lawrences hastened to Bath and hired a house at the rate of a hundred a year. Here, however, as art was not yet so certain as to be trusted to, lodgers were admitted; the sisters of the young artist were placed at respectable boarding schools, and all was happy and prosperous. Sitters were numerous; and those who, at first, only considered him as a curiosity, began to recognize the presence of real taste and elegance in his pictures. His price, a guinea at first, was soon raised to a guinea and a half: his portrait of Mrs. Siddons, as Zara, was admired and engraved; his fame spread far and wide; Sir Henry Harpur desired to adopt him as his son; and Hoare, the painter, saw something so angelic in his looks, that he proposed to paint him as a Christ. His portraits of those days were graceful fac-similes of his sitters; in course of time he learned how to deal with a difficult face, and evoke beauty and delicacy out of very ordinary materials.[1]

As the exclamation of Garrick was, "Will you be a painter or a player, Tom?" the boy imagined, it seems, that he could be both, and, in the very dawn of his fortune as an artist, applied to a company of actors, at Bath, to be admitted to a trial. His father, who cultivated this vain talent in him, appears to have had little faith in what his son's good looks and graceful recitation could produce:

[1] These portraits were generally executed in crayons, of half life size and oval in shape. The Mr. Hoare mentioned here must have been W. Hoare, R.A., the father, and not Prince Hoare the son. He was an old man at this time, but the self-taught Lawrence probably gained more from him than he and his father cared to acknowledge. It is certain that Lawrence's style greatly improved while at Bath.—Ed.

he became alarmed lest the art histrionic should triumph over the art pictorial, and entered into a sort of ill-laid plot with Bernard, the comedian, to evoke the evil spirit of the sock and buskin wholly out of him. The actor thus relates the plot, and its success, in his "Retrospections:" —"All the parties assembled: old Lawrence, and his friends, in the back parlour; young Lawrence, Mr. Palmer, and myself in the front. The manager was no sooner introduced, than, with great adroitness, he at once demanded a specimen of the young man's abilities, and took his seat at one end of the room. I proposed the opening scene between Priuli and Jaffier. We accordingly commenced, I, Priuli, he, Jaffier: he went on very perfectly till, in the well-known passage, 'To me you owe her,' he came to the lines

> 'I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms:
> Indeed you thank'd me, but——'

here he stammered, and became stationary. I held the book, but would not assist him; and he recommenced and stopped, reiterated and hemmed, till his father, who had heard him with growing impatience, pushed open the door, and said, 'You play Jaffier, Tom! hang me if they would suffer you to murder a conspirator.' Mr. Palmer, taking young Lawrence by the hand, assured him in the most friendly manner, that he did not possess those advantages which would render the stage a safe undertaking. The address did not produce an instantaneous effect; it was obvious that the young artist was of a reverse opinion. A conversation ensued, in which I, abusing the life of an actor, and other friends representing the prospects of a painter, young Lawrence at length became convinced, but remarked, with a sigh, 'That if he had gone on the stage, he might have assisted his family much sooner than by his present employment.' My reader can appreciate the affection of this sentiment, but I am unable to describe its delivery, or the effect it took upon every person present." The filial attachment of Lawrence to his family was, from his earliest days, proverbial amongst his friends and acquaintance.

The general notice which he soon afterwards received,

enabled him, perhaps, to look back on his dramatic failure with little regret. He grew in stature, and seemed destined in his person to realize the idea of the sculptor, borrowed from the philosopher of old, that the noblest soul is ever the most splendidly lodged. His boyish style—feeble but pretty—began to make way for one more vigorous and manly; he saw his improving skill, and felt his growing taste, and expressed sometimes not a little surprise at his early success. He did not perceive that it was to the pretty child, and his singular love of drawing, that success was to be attributed; there could be little in his works worthy of such patronage: before wit has grown up to man's estate, and passion and feeling have expanded with our stature, all labours, whether with the pen or the pencil, are necessarily vague and smooth, without sentiment and without character. The prettinesses of pencilling, and the delicacies of manner, of Lawrence, are noteworthy, inasmuch as they show the man in the child; in these he excelled more when he became eminent, than in grand harmony of colouring and masculine energy of thought.

He had not then learned the art in which he afterwards became a master, of softening down the geometrical lines and manifold points of modern dress into something like elegance: the broad and innumerable buttons: the close-fitted capes; the peaked lapels, and hanging cuffs, and pointed skirts of these, our latter days, are sorely in the way of a young artist who thinks of Michael Angelo and the antique, and dreams of his profession like a poet. Nor were the dresses of the women less extravagant than those of the men; their hair frizzed, and filled with pomatum and powder; a wide hat, and enormous feather stuck on the top of the head; a close cut riding-jacket, wide at the shoulders, and pinched at the waist so tightly, that, with the expanding petticoat and spreading hat, they looked like sand-glasses, and were, assuredly, sad frights, either in life or in paintings. In such things the early works of Lawrence abounded—and no wonder, when he dedicated his whole youth to portraiture; and was, therefore, obliged to take sitters as they came, dressed out as fashion or their own fancies dictated. His studio, before he was twelve years

old, was the favourite resort of the beauty, and fashion, and taste of Bath: young ladies loved to sit and converse with this handsome prodigy; men of taste and vertu purchased his crayon heads, which he drew in vast numbers, and carried them far and near, even into foreign lands, to show as the work of the boy-artist of Britain. His father, the public, and his own love of display, all conspired to make him a coxcomb; but his natural good sense, now strengthening every day, and his genius expanding with his growth, carried him safely over those shoals and quicksands on which so many lesser spirits have been shipwrecked.

With his seventeenth year the true fame of Lawrence commences; for then he first dipped his brush in oil colours, and began to free himself from the captivating facilities of crayons. All this was not to be done as soon as wished. He desired to become a great artist, but it was necessary meanwhile to live, and moreover to study the best works; and this he accomplished without abandoning portraiture. He saw that to others the doors of the Academy, and the galleries of painting, were opened wide, while to himself they had been hitherto closed; and that as yet he had learned little, save the common art of copying a face, with a slight leaning towards flattery. Feeling that his own execution was feeble, he looked around him for models of excellence, and laboured hard to profit by them. He copied, first, the style of Rembrandt; then that of Reynolds; and, lastly, he imagined he was imitating Titian. One of those pictures was audacious in subject; of its conception or handling no one has informed us;—this was a Christ bearing the cross, some eight feet high. He never was equal to the solemn grandeur which such a production required; his talents, first and last, lay with the soft, the graceful, and the lovely. He was more at home in a portrait of himself of three-quarters size; it has been described as a wonderful work for one so young, and so unacquainted with colours.

His letters are not the least remarkable of his works at this period of his life. His correspondence was wide, and extended to all ranks. His style of writing was at this time easy: he seemed only desirous of being understood.

In one letter to his mother, he speaks of his own attempts with equal complacency and simplicity. "I shall now say what does not proceed from vanity; nor is it an impulse of the moment; but what from my judgment I can warrant. Though Mr. Prince Hoare's studies have been great, my paintings are better than any I have seen from his pencil. To any but my own family I certainly should not say this; but, excepting Sir Joshua, for the painting of a head, I would risk my reputation with any painter in London." This from a youth of seventeen, during the lifetime of such men as Gainsborough, and Romney, and Hoppner, is decided enough; but he seldom erred in this way; his letters, like his conversation, overflowed with admiration of other artists. To his brethren he was ever generous and sincere; and to the world in general, polite and deferential. He has been accused of having gained less by polish of manners, than he lost in warmth of heart; but to a similar charge, perhaps, all who mingle largely in society are liable. Man in his youth is candid and enthusiastic; intercourse with the world gives his ecstasies a sobering; he grows circumspect and watchful; a graver joy in all things comes upon him; yet the natural warmth of his heart is not necessarily cooled;—he only guards its affection with greater discretion.

The fame of Lawrence, up to this moment, had been wholly provincial: he was unknown through his works in London, where no reputations are taken on trust; and he began to thirst for distinction in the great fountain of honour. No doubt, however, even the capital sometimes adopts the dunce for the genius, the presumptuous quack for the man of science. Even associations expressly for encouraging and rewarding genius have not been always able to distinguish the true metal of talent from the flashy counterfeit.[1] In truth, genius is daring, and thinks and

[1] Of all the present living members of the Royal Academy, four only were able, in the annual strife for distinction, to carry away the gold medal; nay, some of the most eminent could never reach the silver one. Lawrence, indeed, never contended for the lesser honours of the Royal Academy; it is nevertheless singular that none of the presidents of that body, either dead or living, ever obtained the gold medal.

works out of the common way; while mere talent plods on in the style and the forms of others, deals in long established sentiment and graces, and is rewarded by judges of the same calibre of intellect. The honours of the Society of Arts seem for many years to have been preferred to those bestowed by the Academy; and I can impute this to no better cause than that the money which the former bestowed was more acceptable to needy young men than the medals of the latter. Some feeling of this sort probably induced the elder Lawrence to transmit to the Society of Arts a copy of the Transfiguration on glass, which his son had painted two years before. The merit of the piece was admitted, but nothing could alter in its favour a standing rule, which settled that all works of competition should be made within a year and a day of the time they are sent to the Adelphi. They nevertheless sent him a silver palette gilt, and five guineas; the painter was pleased with the former, his father thought the latter too little for such a performance; but little or large, the Society have never, save once, given a larger sum since; indeed, they have only awarded two money premiums, one of three, the other of twenty guineas: works of real merit are accordingly no longer sent.

Lawrence came to London in 1787, and took handsome apartments in Leicester Fields. The fame of Sir Joshua Reynolds rendered the situation popular, nor had the name of Hogarth ceased to be remembered; that of Lawrence was now added, though at first with but indifferent success. He opened an exhibition of his works, over which his father presided;[1] but the charm which his extreme youth had formerly bestowed was passed and gone, and little was made by the wondrous "boy painter." He was not, however, without resources; having taken Salisbury in his journey to town, his pockets were yet full of the

[1] This exhibition was an unfortunate speculation of his father's, who, with a little money that had been left to his daughter Anne, purchased a small collection of stuffed birds and curiosities of various kinds that was then being exhibited in the Strand, and, adding to it his son's paintings, thought to make it a success. It did not even pay expenses, and the birds, &c., were soon sold for next to nothing.—Ed.

money obtained by crayon portraits there, and having felt his way in London, he resolved to abide where the market was largest, and accordingly brought his mother from Bath, and united the whole family again. He took a house in Duke Street, St. James's, and removed his studio to Jermyn Street. One of his reasons for coming to London was, that he might study in the Academy; and on the 13th of September, 1787, he took his place as a student; his large bright eyes, his elegant form, his hair long and plentiful flowing down upon his shoulders, and a certain country air which London is long in removing, made many look at him oftener than once. His person, however, was nothing to the beauty of his drawings: he soon made two—"The fighting Gladiator," and "The Apollo of Belvidere,"—of such excellence as surpassed all competition. He was satisfied with the result; he contended for no medal, and left the prizes for those who needed such distinction.

Lawrence, who, if he loved the notice of the powerful, coveted the regard of men of genius more, was now desirous of being introduced to Sir Joshua Reynolds; and this pleasure was procured to him by a letter from Hoare. The President was at times sufficiently easy of access; but now and then he was in a stern mood, as men will be when interruptions are frequent, and serious studies are invaded by some pestering popinjay, whom no hint can induce to go. An artist of the hour had called on Sir Joshua to receive his judgment. The President had the dauber's work before him; and his eyebrows were lowering. The student was defending his piece against the remarks of Reynolds; and his pertness was worthy of his dulness. "Well, well! go on, go on!" said Sir Joshua; and turned from him to Lawrence, who stood with an oil portrait of himself in his hand, painted in 1786. He placed it in a proper light, and looked at it long and attentively. "Now, young man," he said, "I must have some talk with *you*. I suppose you think the sentiment of this is very fine, and the colouring very natural?" Lawrence spoke with modesty. Reynolds fixed his keen eyes on him. "You have been looking at the old masters,

I see; but my advice is this:—study nature, study nature." They parted, mutually pleased with each other. I have, however, heard it said, by those who had the means of knowing, that Reynolds, on examining the early female portraits of Lawrence, remarked that they were deficient in the meek and modest composure which belongs to the loftier order of female expression; and hazarded a doubt whether this fault would not adhere to him.

Those who have endeavoured to account for what they call "the early and wonderful success" of Lawrence in London, and for that influence which opened, as it were by magic, the hearts and the houses of the rich and the learned, have imputed it to his graceful manners and pleasing address. They forget that the success of which they speak was not very sudden in its growth; he did not become decidedly popular for several years. He was too prudent and too knowing, young as he was, to appear rashly in oil colours, when such men as Reynolds, Opie, Gainsborough, Hoppner, and West were in the market; he studied incessantly, acquired gradually a knowledge, and then a mastery in colour; and when, at length, he thought he might appear with some chance of success, he sent his productions to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, and became a public candidate for fame. The desire of seeing the wonder of Bath no doubt induced many people of rank in town to extend their invitations to Lawrence: when these found that his talents were even superior to his manners, they began to employ him; and some were willing to perceive in him some recompense for the loss of Sir Joshua, whose declining health was now withdrawing him from the service of the public.

Of the manners of the young painter at this period there are many accounts.[1] A lady, who knew him well,

[1] In a letter from Sir Martin Archer Shee, then a student at the Royal Academy, to his brother, dated May 18, 1789, he says:—"Lawrence is a very genteel, handsome young man, but rather effeminate in manner. . . . . He is wonderfully laborious in his manner of painting, and has the most uncommon patience and perseverance. . . . . His price is ten guineas a head, and I hear he intends raising it. There is no young artist in London bids so fair to arrive at excellence, and I have no doubt he will, if he is careful, soon make a fortune;"

informs me, that in all he said or did in company, there was an air of offensive affectation; but that when she met with him in after-life, it was only on her most zealously looking for it that she could find any traces of the original sin. This is probably near the truth. He spent much of his leisure, at this time, in the society of Farington, and Smirke, and Fuseli, and other artists; and it was his pleasure, when conversation flagged, to rise up and recite passages from Milton, which he did with a softness of voice and gentleness of manner, "very much," as Fuseli said, "like Belial, but *deucedly unlike Beelzebub.*"

Amid all his success and fine company he had his own vexations. Want of money was then, and continued to be, with Lawrence, the source of much unhappiness. His father embarked in speculations above his capacity and purse, and the deficiencies had to be made good. His money coming in, as luck sent customers, each sum was apt to be looked upon as a windfall, and squandered accordingly; while, to add to all, he loved to associate with expensive companions, and never, for one moment, carried into effect any one of those schemes of economy which his frequent distresses made him vow. He began the world deeply in debt—his father kept him poor; and when manhood came, and money poured in as it never before poured on any painter, a third of it was lost in the traffic of accommodation bills; another portion was lost for want of a well arranged plan of domestic outlay;—and, let it never be forgotten, much was swallowed up in matters of charity, for he was at all times eminently generous. His money melted away like snow upon thatch, and dropped through a thousand invisible openings. He

and again, in 1790, Shee writes: "I cannot conceive who could have so much misinformed you about Lawrence. He is the very reverse of what he has been represented, bears an excellent character, and is the entire support of his father and family. He is modest, genteel, and unaffected, by no means inclined to dissipation, and one of the most laborious, industrious men in his profession that ever practised it. When you add to this that he has the first abilities in his line, and is perhaps one of the handsomest young men you have ever seen, you will probably conclude his situation to be rather enviable" ("Life of Shee," vol. i. pp. 116-136). —Ed.

often alluded to this circumstance himself, and ingenuously acknowledged that he won much, and, without being a man of expense, spent it all. His poverty in early life is not to be wondered at. He allowed his father and mother three hundred a year, and subscribed a bond in addition for a large sum, part of which he actually paid.

One of his first works in London was "Homer reciting the Iliad to the Greeks;"—a commission from Payne Knight, an accomplished scholar, but who mistook his own knowledge for natural taste and genius. The work was fine in drawing, and had considerable delicacy of colour; it was however deficient in sentiment: he never had the art of telling a story, or of putting a historical tongue into his pictures. His next work was more after his natural spirit, and may be regarded as the foundation of his fame; this was the portrait of Miss Farren, afterwards Countess of Derby. She was very beautiful, and the painter caught all the fascination of her looks, and put into her eyes a lustre new to English art. In other respects, there was a strange deficiency of taste and propriety; the actress was painted in a winter cloak and muff, with naked arms. It was nevertheless favourably compared with Reynolds, whose Mrs. Billington, as St. Cecilia, was well remembered, and considered equal to Hoppner, who ten years older, and with the patronage of the Prince of Wales, which brought half the loveliness of the land to his easel, supplied the Exhibition annually with likenesses of ladies of quality. The public praised, but criticism was not sparing. Lawrence had never felt the rod before, and was astonished and confounded with the complaint of want of propriety in the costume, till he was tranquillized by the assurance of Burke, that "painters' proprieties are the best,"—a sentence more neat than just.

His portraits in oil of the Queen and of the Princess Amelia, exhibited in 1788, told that he had won the notice and patronage of the throne. How this was achieved—for no one has imputed it to the sense which the King could entertain of his merit, since his Majesty had long

rejected Reynolds—has never yet been related. George III. had an aversion to all artists who claimed fame from having studied abroad, and Lawrence was wholly of home manufacture. By whatever means obtained, he had skill enough to retain his advantage. He pleased the Princesses by his pencil, and by his manners; and he won the regard of the foreign domestics, by well-timed and gentle flirtations with the spouse of one of the court musicians. These latter were in their nature so harmless, as to amuse the lady herself, and excite merriment in the King and Queen, who occasionally rallied him upon his gallantry. Those whom the King desired to honour were in the sure way to preferment. He had been chiefly instrumental in founding the Royal Academy, and considered it one of the blessings of his reign, in which all men of merit in his sight had a right to participate. But by the law which the King had himself sanctioned, no artist could be admitted an associate under twenty-four years of age; and as Lawrence was only twenty-one, his Majesty was in despair, till some one cunning in the art of evading what cannot be properly met, proposed that he should be made a sort of extra or supplemental associate, till his standing might entitle him to come in regularly. This was eagerly supported by Reynolds and West, but opposed by thirty-seven of their brethren, who brought forward one Wheatley,[1] and elected him in the teeth of the royal recommendation. On the next vacancy Lawrence was proposed again; he was yet far from four-and-twenty; and several members said the evasion of the law was destructive of all order, and that the royal wish, though courteously expressed, was an attack upon their independence:—however, on the 10th of November, 1791, he was elected a supplemental associate; a sort of honour which no one has enjoyed either before or since.

[1] This is rather a slighting way of speaking of a painter who was a man of some note in his own day, and whose pretty, though perhaps somewhat conventional representations of English peasant life and English scenery do not deserve to be forgotten entirely in this. He painted chiefly in water-colour, and a good many of his works have been engraved.—Ed.

All this escaped not the notice of the audacious and malicious satirist Peter Pindar. He wrote a lampoon, called "Rights of Kings," in which he ironically claims for the monarch the right to be gratified in the "minutest of his predilections," and expostulates with the members of the Academy for having insolently admitted Wheatley, and rejected "a Mr. Lawrence, whom the King, from his superior knowledge of painting, is convinced has fair pretensions to the honours of an R.A." Of the verse one specimen may suffice:—

> "Behold, his Majesty is in a passion!
> Tremble, ye rogues! and tremble all the nation!
> Suppose he takes it in his royal head,
> To strike your academic idol dead;
> Knock down your house, dissolve you in his ire,
> And strip you of your boasted title, 'Squire."

I know not what Wolcot said in verse, or what the Academicians said in prose, when, on the death of Reynolds, in the year 1792, Lawrence was appointed to succeed him in his office of painter in ordinary to the King.[1] He was then only some two-and-twenty years old; and Opie, Hoppner, and Romney were in the full enjoyment of health and reputation. The portrait of the Countess of Derby had done much; but this royal distinction did more for the fame of Lawrence. To the world, who seldom look with very penetrating eyes, it seemed that a youth, newly arrived at man's estate, was considered by the court of Britain as the first of the land in art. Several of his brethren were secretly sore at the preference; and nothing but the gentleness and conciliating nature of Lawrence prevented him from becoming an object of dislike among them.

The King ordered him to paint whole lengths of himself and the Queen, to be presented by Lord Macartney to the Emperor of China; and, as the fame of this somewhat

[1] About the same date also he was elected a member of the Dilettanti Society, and for his sake this aristocratic society rescinded its rule that no person was admissible as a member who had not crossed the Alps. He entered also at once upon the office of painter to the society, which Sir Joshua's death had left vacant.—Ed.

romantic expedition flew over the earth, the circumstance of the royal portraits from the pencil of Lawrence was not left untold.

With this increase of honour, the painter's desire of display extended a little: he grew more sumptuous in his dress; took splendid apartments in Old Bond Street; and, justly distrusting his own talents in household economy, he made his friend Farington, who was not encumbered with commissions, his secretary, allowing him to draw twenty pounds per week for domestic outlay. How his income, at this time mortgaged to Angerstein, to liquidate a large advance of money, might have succeeded under his own management, I know not: it is well known that it did not prosper in the hands of the new chamberlain. "I began life wrongly," said Lawrence, in after years. "I spent more money than I earned, and involved myself in debt, for which I have been paying heavy interest." His usual price at this period for a full-length portrait was one hundred guineas; for a half-length, fifty; and for the head size, twenty-five.

Royal favour and public fame had now made him, in his twenty-third year, a person of note and consideration: when his paintings made their appearance in the Exhibition, their beauty of drawing, and truth of colouring, were sharply criticized. He had been hitherto accustomed, except in one instance, to hear of nothing but "the wonderful portraits of the wonderful youth;" and to see writers, who were sharp and sour with others, grow milk and honey to him. "This is a matchless effusion of early genius," said one. "This is a magnificent portrait by the self-taught boy of Devizes," said a second. "A second Raphael—a second Raphael in person and mind," shouted a third; while a fourth cried, "There is the presence of genius in all he does; he will rise the Michael Angelo of England!" When he grew to manhood, and kings and queens praised him, criticism altered its tone; though, assuredly, it could not plead in extenuation of the charge that Lawrence had fallen off; in fact, he had risen in every point, and was still rising. One of the fiercest of this race was a man better known as Antony Pasquïn

than by his own name of Williams.[1] He was silent so long as Reynolds ruled; but on West's elevation to the chair, an artist whom he hated because the King loved him, his venomous nature broke out, and Lawrence had to suffer as well as others. The principle of his criticism was to express unbounded admiration of art; to speak with rapture of the high historic, of the poetic landscape, and of the fine manly style of portraiture; and then never to admit that any one in the Academy, man or woman (ladies were then members), had at all approached the standard of excellence.

Of this man's criticisms I shall collect a few specimens: there is some cleverness, and much of that "snip-snap short, and interruption smart," which a higher spirit of the same tribe complains of in the dunces of his day. He is speaking of Lawrence's portraits:—"1. This is a likeness of Sir Gilbert Elliot: as this portrait is *not finished*, I shall forbear to investigate its merits or demerits. 2. Portrait of an Archbishop. This is a likeness of the spiritual lord of Canterbury. It conveys a full idea of the florid, well-fed visage of this fortunate arch-prelate; and a monk better appointed never sighed before the tomb of Becket. 3. Portrait of a nobleman. This is a likeness of Lord Auckland, a man to whom the capricious goddess has been equally bountiful. This heterogeneous nobleman is so fantastically enveloped in drapery, that I cannot ascertain what is meant for his coat, and what for the curtain: they are all of the same strength and importance. He appears to think so intensely, that his eyeballs seem bursting from their spheres. 4. Portrait of a Lady of Quality. This is a whole length of Lady Emily Hobart in the character of Irene. The face is chalky and sickly; the robe is so white, and so unencumbered with shadow, that it might pass for an habiliment of porcelain texture. While I viewed it, I was betrayed from the recollection of the surrounding objects, and I momentarily imagined that if I cast a stone at the vestment, I should shiver it to pieces. 5. Portrait of a Gentleman. This, I believe, is

[1] This wretched Williams is one of the chief victims of Gifford's "Baviad and Mæviad."

the portrait of Mr. (Payne) Knight, and is repulsive in the attitude. It fills one with the idea of an irascible pedagogue explaining Euclid to a dunce. Mr. Lawrence began his professional career upon a false and delusive principle: his portraits were delicate, but not true; and because he met the approbation of a few fashionable spinsters, he vainly imagined that his labours were perfect.—He may claim the merit, like Epicurus of old, of being self taught. If he had enjoyed the advantage of having studied in Italy, and been bred in the school of the Caracci, instead of the seminaries of Somersetshire, I think he might have ranked among the most prominent masters in either of the Roman or Florentine Academies. All the assistance he had to cultivate his genius was the unremitting attention of a tender father, who, though he knew but little of the arts, knew much of his duty. It is but justice to Mr. Lawrence to say, that he repays this parental kindness with the most filial piety."

Having abused his portraits, and eulogized his character, Pasquin proceeds to discuss his powers in historical composition. "Swift, in his advice to a young divine, recommends him to abstain from attempts at wit; for it was possible he might not possess any. For the same reason, I would recommend to Mr. Lawrence to discontinue his attempts at the sublime in painting: it is dangerous ground, where to fail is to be contemptible. He has not ballast enough in his mind. The most important effort of a young painter should be to yoke his imagination in the trammels of reason, so that the sober movements of the one may set boundaries to the wildnesses of the other. Though this is truly difficult, it must be effected; or else the licentiousness of that quiet creating spirit will only give variegated monsters to the sight, which can never be subservient to historic truth or moral allegory."

These, and remarks such as these, the fortunate portrait painter was obliged to endure. Other men were not wanting who whispered that he could copy, but could not create; that it was well for him the ladies of England were lovely and the gentlemen rich, else fame and he had never fallen acquainted. He was stung, it is said, with such ob-

servations, and mentally resolved to assert his claims to the title of creator of mind, as well as copier of forms. He sought about for a subject; and while he was hesitating between Shakespeare and Milton, the Royal Academy admitted him a member, December 4, 1795; and immediately many titled and important persons entered their names as candidates for their likenesses. Much as Lawrence longed to dip his brush in the hues of history, he was not insensible that he was labouring on borrowed money; that the votaries of fancy and poetry were paid with applause alone; while those who ministered to the vanities of men, by perpetuating their looks, came in for their share of the good things of this life. Contenting himself, therefore, with thinking of poetical subjects, or making sketches in moments of leisure,—he now addressed himself, with great diligence, to the task of portraiture. Of the numerous heads dashed in during the period when the historical fever was on him, the only one worth mentioning, for the sake of the subject, is that of Cowper the poet, exhibited in 1795. Letters, too, passed between the painter and the author of "The Task." The vigorous graphic simplicity of those by the latter contrast strangely with the feeble prettinesses of the former. The poet invited him to Weston; and his last words are, "When will you give me a drawing of the old oak?"

It had been for some time whispered that Lawrence was busied on a grand poetic work. His friends alone were admitted to see it during progress. The grandeur of the outlines, the magnificence of the colouring, and the sublimity of the sentiment, were all spoken of in more than the common rapture of eulogy. The subject was, however, left a secret till the exhibition of 1797 opened up the mystery, when it was found to be Satan calling to his legions—

"Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen."

The first that spoke was Fuseli; he complained, and he criticized. His complaint was that Lawrence had stolen his devil from him; and that his criticism was, that the figure was the Lubber Fiend, and not the Master Fiend of Milton; in short, a fine piece of colour, and a failure. In

truth Fuseli imagined that no one had the power to paint from the great poets but himself; and, moreover, whenever he saw a passage from either Shakespeare or Milton poetically handled, he seldom failed to declare that "he had sketched the very selfsame thing—that he was careless of his designs, and showed them to too many; but never mind,—he could afford it; and let the poor creature keep what it had stolen."[1] That Fuseli said all this openly was not unknown to Lawrence, who adverted to it the very last time I had the pleasure of being alone with him. These were his words:—"Fuseli, sir, was the most satirical of human beings: he had also the greatest genius for art of any man I ever knew. His mind was so essentially poetic, that he was incapable of succeeding in any ordinary subject. That figure of Satan, now before you, occasioned the only interruption which our friendship, of many years' standing, ever experienced. He was, you know, a great admirer of Milton, from whom he had made many sketches. When he first saw my Satan, he was nettled, and said, 'You borrowed the idea from me.'—'In truth, I did take the idea from you,' I said; 'but it was from your person, not from your paintings. When we were together at Stackpole Court, in Pembrokeshire, you may remember how you stood on yon high rock which overlooks the bay of Bristol, and gazed down upon the sea which rolled so magnificently below. You were in raptures; and while you were crying,—"Grand! grand! Jesu Christ, how grand! how terrific!" you put yourself in a wild posture; I thought on the Devil looking into the abyss, and took a slight sketch of you at the moment: here it is. My Satan's posture now, was yours then.'"

When Fuseli was pacified, there were others who refused

[1] There are several stories told of Lawrence *borrowing* ideas from Fuseli, one in particular relating to Lawrence's picture of "Prospero raising the Storm," which was repeated in the "Fine Arts Magazine." There does not seem to have been much truth in this particular story, but Lawrence, like many of our painters, was doubtless somewhat fired by Fuseli's enthusiasm for poetic art, and consciously or unconsciously imitated his extravagant style. It was a belief of Fuseli's, however, that the sublime and terrible in art belonged to him and Michael Angelo alone, so that whenever anybody else tried to walk in the same perilous path, he cried out that they were trespassing on his domain.—Ed.

to be pleased. "The figure of Satan," said the common persecutor, Pasquin, "is colossal and very ill drawn; the body is so disproportioned to the extremities, that it appears all legs and arms, and might, at a distance, be mistaken for a sign of the Spread Eagle. The colouring has as little analogy to truth as the contour; for it is so coloured that it conveys an idea of a mad sugar-baker dancing naked in the conflagration of his own treacle. But the liberties taken with his infernal majesty are so numerous, so various, and so insulting, that we are amazed that the ecclesiastic orders do not interfere in behalf of an old friend." Men, milder of mood than this surly savage, were not wanting, who spoke of the merits and defects of this noble picture in the language of civility. Such flights, however, as the sublime poet required in the embodier of his thoughts, were beyond the power of Lawrence. His Satan wants the majestic melancholy and lofty malignity of the Archangel ruined: he could have painted the soft and the effeminate Belial: the master fiend required an artist of a sterner and higher mood.[1] Poetry produces such painters frequently. See with what true Miltonic vigour Byron portrays Satan on his unwonted visit to the gates of heaven:—

> "But, bringing up the rear of this bright host,
> A spirit of a different aspect waved
> His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
> Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved:

[1] Lawrence's Satan, formerly in the collection of the Duke of Norfolk, now belongs to the Royal Academy, and hangs on the staircase leading to the Diploma Galleries, where all may see it, and judge of the truth of these criticisms. Most people will, we imagine, agree with Allan Cunningham in considering that he attempted in it a flight beyond his powers. He used, as we have seen, to be able to recite Milton when a little boy with great applause, but his father seems to have had a conviction that he could not manage Satan, for Mr. John Bernard relates, in his "Retrospections," that once Lawrence was urged by some friends to recite to them "Satan's address to the Sun." On opening his Milton for this purpose, however, a paper dropped out on which was written, in his father's hand, "Tom, mind you don't touch Satan." "It would have been well, perhaps," says Messrs. Redgrave, "when he spread his canvas for his great work that he had remembered his father's inhibition." It was like a note of prophetic warning, "Mind you don't touch Satan."—Ed.

His brow was like the deep when tempest-tost:
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space."

That the reputation which Lawrence achieved by his portraits filled up in earlier years the measure of his ambition, we have the assurance of his own tongue; but as he improved in skill of hand, and in happiness of posture, so likewise did his desire of excellence in the higher departments of art increase. I know not what he thought of his success in the grand style; but it was generally felt by others, that in portraiture he was less approachable than in the historic. He wished, however, to show to the world that he was not a mere face painter, as the brethren of the fancy department insultingly called him. "The Satan," he said, "answered my secret motives in attempting it; my success in portraits will no longer be thought accident or fortune; and if I have trod the second path with honour, it is because my limbs are strong. My claims are acknowledged by the circle of taste, and are undisputed by competitors and rivals." This is the language of a man much disposed to be on civil terms with himself; and perhaps it is, after all, preferable to the depreciating tone in which many able men speak of the works of their own hands. But he did not trust his fame for the season to "Satan." He exhibited a very noble portrait of Mrs. Siddons; all eyes, save one, saw the truth and grandeur of the picture. "It is no more like her than Hebe is like Bellona," said the intrepid Pasquin. "We have here youth, flexibility of features, and an attempt at the formation of beauty, to denote a lady who is proverbially so stern in her countenance that it approaches to savageness." The beauty of all criticism is truth. Honest Antony seems not to be over solicitous about the accuracy of what he said. If, however, he has preserved, amid all his bitterness, the words of Reynolds when he first saw the portraits of Lawrence, we can forgive him. "This young man has begun at a point of excellence where I left off," are the words Sir Joshua is said to have used; and they are supposed to allude to the fine drawing which was now added to fine colour.

The vexation of perplexing criticisms was forgotten in the double loss which Lawrence was now doomed to sustain, in the death of his mother, whom he dearly loved, and of his father also, who, amid all his caprices, forgot not that he was blessed with such a son. He stood looking, it is said, long, long, on the serene face of his mother; not a tear fell; he touched her hand, and said, "That hand, not an hour since, held mine, and seemed unwilling to part with me!" He burst into tears, and sat down beside her. His father was grown old and feeble, and afflicted with a cough. Lawrence was engaged with a sitter when a letter came from Rugby, saying that his father was dying. He took a place in the first conveyance, and hurried into the country, but came too late. "He died," said his son, "before I could reach him; but he died full of affection to us; of firm faith and fortitude; and without a groan." The memory of his mother he cherished to the last with the most affectionate endearment.

To paint up to the expectations of captious critics was, perhaps, what Lawrence never tried: he probably thought the praise he received was right, and the censure wrong. Be that as it may, his chief study was to meet the rivalry of Hoppner, who had, at this time, nearly monopolized the youthful beauty of the nation. This rivalry was perhaps injurious to the true fame of Lawrence: he complained that Hoppner had an undue share of soft and courtly customers; and turning his attention to the alluring graces and gentle delicacies of his art, obtained the mastery over all competitors, at the expense of that stately and serene simplicity of style which ought to have been his mark. This was not the work of a day, nor yet of a year: the strife between the court painters was maintained for many seasons; sometimes public opinion was with Hoppner, sometimes with Lawrence; but it was observed by all good judges, that the latter was gaining ground in the race; that the fascinations of his style were prevailing against all opposition. I have spoken elsewhere of the satiric comments of Hoppner, on some of his rival's ladies: the objection has been revived in our own day by a witty poet, who said, "Phillips shall paint my wife, and Lawrence my mistress."

He heard, it is said, not without some concern, this species of remark, and resolved to give to the world an image or two of a sterner stamp. "Satan," he said, "was altogether imagination; his portraits were lucky realities; some work uniting the two would, he thought, succeed: and he painted "Coriolanus at the Hearth of Aufidius." This work, exhibited in 1798, received some censure and much praise; was called a failure by some, and a triumph by others. He thought very well of it himself, and when questioned respecting its class, said, "I call it a half-history picture." It was a portrait. He sought for the noble Roman in the looks and form of John Kemble; and caught much of the manner and the manliness of one of the most heroic of all actors. The fine figure, the fine posture, and the fine colouring, charmed the multitude, and nearly disarmed criticism. But these, alluring as they are, must be considered only as the shell or husk of the fierce majestic spirit of the proud soldier: in this mental effort he has seriously failed. The genius of the artist lay with the serenely beautiful and the calmly contemplative; his hand was too delicate for the stern austerity of the Roman. Besides, who can paint a volcano ready to burst out, or a bomb about to explode? Nor can it be said that he was more successful in catching the character of a Scottish mountaineer. He attired his "Chief of Kintail"[1] like a harlequin,—the picturesque costume of the north, mingled indifferently with the act of parliament regimentals of the south: the Highland bonnet, too, sat ungracefully on a powdered head. He was more successful in the portraits of the ladies exhibited along with these. His "Mrs. Angerstein with her children" has the simplicity we love, and which we think the most unattainable of all the charms of art.

Lawrence was now thirty years old: kings and princes were his patrons, and peers and peeresses his companions; nor had England a genius who reckoned not his acquaintance a pleasure, if not an honour. By his pencil he opened his way to the domestic society of the noblest, and by the

[1] The late Lord Seaforth.

charms of his conversation he secured the regard of the most fastidious: he sketched ladies' heads in company, added his name, and presented them to the parties with a grace which was sometimes as well received as the gift. He recited the sterner or tenderer passages from Shakespeare in a way worthy of the stage, and ladies called him a more graceful Garrick; and when to all this was added that he wrote poetry with great readiness, fair hands were held rapturously up, and "painter, player, and poet" was the exclamation of all. That Lawrence wrote verses was at first known to a chosen friend or two; then the secret escaped into his letters, and finally became the talk of the coterie and the town: curiosity was excited; and this was in some measure gratified by the painter, who, to save himself the trouble and the blush of reciting his own compositions, wrote them in a neat hand into a small neat volume, and many friends were indulged with a look. This made a stir for a time: when the verses were forgotten, the painter nevertheless kept up his intercourse with Parnassus: he mentions the "Muse" with the reverence of a votary in his letters; and in one written within a year of his death he speaks of poetry as an art which he practised in private.

The knack of writing rhyme, in which so many excel, is frequently mistaken for the poet's power, which it resembles as much as the unconscious quiverings of galvanism resemble the fiery beatings of an impassioned heart. This knack of rhyme our painter assuredly had. His verses are mostly in the despairing Thyrsis strain; and it is plain, from their want of nature and passion, that he sung of what he did not feel. He sometimes, however, threw off the man of sorrow, and put on an aspect of mirth. The following "Thoughts on being alone after Dinner," are favourable specimens of his intermediate style.

"Well, here's to her, who, far away,
Cares not that I am grave or gay;
So now no more I'll drink,
But fold my arms and meditate,
And clap my feet upon the grate,
And on grave matters think.

"'Tis, let me see, full sixteen years,
And wondrous short the time appears,
Since, with inquiry warm,
With beauty's novel power amazed,
I follow'd, midst the crowd, and gazed
On Siddon's beauteous form.

"Up Bath's fatiguing streets I ran,
Just half pretending to be man,
And fearful to intrude;
Busied I look'd on some employ,
Or limp'd to seem some other boy,
Lest she should think me rude.

"The sun was bright, and on her face,
As proud to show the stranger grace,
Shone with its purest rays;
And through the folds that veil'd her form,
Motion display'd its happiest charm,
To catch the admiring gaze.

"The smiling lustre of her eyes,
That triumph'd in our wild surprise,
Well I remember still:
They spoke of joy to yield delight,
And plainly said, 'If I'm the sight,
Good people, take your fill.'"

These lines were written regarding one with whom at least he imagined himself in love: yet when he addressed her in a graver strain, he was less successful:—

"Hear, angel, hear! be conscious to the line,
Though rude the sounds: no syren art is mine:
All is spring round thee, hear a wintry lyre,
Touch'd with a lover's, not a poet's, fire.
And ye who seal my doom, whose thoughtful care
Would steel her senses to my heart's despair,
Behold me reverence still, but disobey:
Yes, 'tis the wretched Lawrence' daring lay!
Upbraid me, scorn me, hate me, if ye can,
I play the lover, and I am but man.
Unknown, uncertain, the most envied fate,
And many sorrows wait the happiest state:
None too so humble, but can humbler see,
And there are idiots who can envy me.
Oh! sweet one, tell them what it is to love;
Do thou the wretchedness they envy prove;
Hold up the wreath thy charms have doom'd to fade,
And show the last example thou hast made."

These lines, indifferent as they are, allude to the heroine of a tragic story, which I shall relate as it has been told to me.

The agreeable manners, and high talents of Lawrence, opened for him, even in extreme youth, the doors of every house where genius was respected, or pleasant company coveted. One of his chief friends was Mrs. Siddons, the great actress. She had sat to him, when he was young, in the character of "Zara," and afterwards in that of "Aspasia;" and such was the skill of his delineations, that they were engraved, and a vast number of impressions sold. She was, therefore, a benefactress; for no one will deny that her fame and her noble looks attracted purchasers and patrons. Two lovely daughters, at this time, adorned her fireside. To both,—the story says,—when they grew up, he was most sedulous in his attentions; complimentary in public, when both were together, and passionate and overflowing with love in private, when there was but one to hear. To one, however, he spoke more warmly or more successfully than to the other. She listened to his vows and protestations, and believed that he was sincere. He had no sooner gained her affections than, without cold words, altered looks, or any dispute whatever, he turned from her to her sister, and had the audacity to make love and offer her marriage almost in the same breath. This opened the eyes of both; but it was too late for one: the perfidious lover was dismissed; but the young lady was so affected that she drooped and died.

Such is the story once whispered about, and now more openly related since the death of those who would have been most affected by hearing it. In comparing it, however, with the character of Lawrence, and coupling it with the circumstance that he ever after continued on good terms with the family of which Mrs. Siddons was a member, I must indulge the hope that public rumour and private scandal united, as they often do, to darken this tale, and fix a tragic spot on one of the great heirs of fame in art.[1] He has found apologists, such as a handsome man,

[1] This story has recently received full confirmation in Fanny Kemble's pleasant work, "Recollections of my Girlhood." The two young ladies,

who could flatter with both tongue and pencil, will readily find. A lady with compassionate tenderness of heart, and a disposition more than merciful, speaks thus softly of his failings:—"His character was beautiful, and much to be loved; his manners were likely to mislead without his intending it. He could not write a common answer to a dinner invitation, without its assuming the tone of a billet-doux; the very commonest conversation was held in that soft low whisper, and with that tone of deference and interest, which are so unusual, and so calculated to please. I am myself persuaded that he never intentionally gave pain. He was not a male coquet; he had no plan of conquest. All that I know of his attachment was the ill-fated and never-to-be-defended —— affair." The conclusion of

who suffered thus from Lawrence's fickleness, were her cousins, and she expressly states that he proposed first for the elder sister, but afterwards, in "a paroxysm of self-abandoned misery, confessed that he had mistaken his own feelings," and implored Mrs. Siddons to permit him to transfer his addresses from the one to the other sister. "How this extraordinary change was accomplished," writes Fanny Kemble, "I know not; but only that it took place, and that Maria Siddons (the younger sister) became engaged to her sister's faithless lover. She died, however, before they could be married, exacting, it is said, a promise from her sister that she would never become Lawrence's wife." This was not needed, for both sisters, it would seem, were very delicate, and this unhappy courtship ended in the death of the eldest as well as the youngest. It was a subject, as one may well imagine, that the sensitive Lawrence could never bear to recall. His sensitiveness, however, did not prevent him, even in his old age, from playing at love-making in a sentimental manner. One of the latest objects of his adoration would seem to have been Fanny Kemble herself, the young cousin of the two Misses Siddons. She owns to having felt something of the "dangerous fascination" of this old flirt. "His sentimentality was of a peculiarly mischievous order," she writes, "as it not only induced women to fall in love with him, but enabled him to persuade himself that he was in love with them, and apparently with more than one at a time."

The portrait of Fanny Kemble, in her favourite character of Juliet, was one of the last that he executed.

Though Allan Cunningham is thus correct in saying that he continued on good terms with the Siddons family, Mrs. Siddons herself, according to her niece, never saw him after the death of her daughters. She must have forgiven him, however, and have loved him, for she expressed a wish to her brother that, when she died, she should be carried to the grave by him and Lawrence. Lawrence, however, died a little while before her.—Ed.

this singular apology refers to the fate of Miss Siddons; the commencement, to his conduct in other attachments, if they merit so tender a name. Common rumour, after relating the tale in its most painful shape, mournfully adds, that, as the anniversary of the death of Miss Siddons came round, he gave way to uncontrollable bursts of melancholy; that he wore mourning for her sake while he lived; and sealed his letters with black wax. He certainly, in general, wore a black coat, but this was probably a matter of taste; all artists abhor gilt buttons. I am assured by one who knew both Lawrence and Mrs. Siddons well, that the young lady died much in the usual way of disease and a doctor.

Lawrence, so far from breaking with the family of Miss Siddons, continued to make use of her uncle and natural protector John Kemble, a man of the highest personal character, and even of romantic sentiments of honour, as a model for his "half-historical pieces." "Rolla," "Cato," and "Hamlet" all followed in the train of "Coriolanus." The "Rolla," a splendid picture, is perhaps a little melodramatic; but so is the play in which "Rolla" appears. The colouring is fine, and the drawing nearly faultless. The "Cato" will never be named as one of the finest of the painter's works: Kemble is trying with all his might to put on the looks of the "last of the Romans,"—but he fails. It is far otherwise with the "Hamlet;" a work of the highest kind,—sad, thoughtful, melancholy: with looks conversing with death and the grave; a perfect image of the prince of the great dramatist. This picture Lawrence himself placed above all his works, except the "Satan:" but it far surpasses the "Satan" in propriety of action, accuracy of expression, and grandeur of colouring. The light touches the face and bosom, and falls on the human skull on which he is musing. It is one of the noblest paintings of the modern school. Many wish it had been the pleasure of Lawrence to have given his country more works of this stamp; and no doubt we could have spared some scores of those "unlettered nameless faces," of which his pencil was so prolific; but which, nevertheless, must be mentioned, as they employed most of his time, and con-

stituted the main source of his fortune, if not even of his popular fame.

Eminent painters were now arising on all sides: in addition to Opie, Hoppner, and Beechey, Shee began to distinguish himself both in literature and art. Phillips, too, had shown such poetic feeling in his portrait of Blake, as raised him high among his brethren. The elder artists lost the lead in portrait; and Lawrence, when little more than thirty years of age, stood highest in this department. I speak with less certainty about his pre-eminence in limning the lords of the creation than of his superiority in portraying those softer and more delicate looks, which, expressing little save love, and grace, and gentle sensibility, are as elusive to the brush as quicksilver to the touch. A manly face is one of those broad marks easily hit; it tells much, and by seizing only a part of the expression the likeness is secured: not so with the face of beauty; it is composed of many delicate pencillings, and colours laid on by nature's most cunning hand: and these must be all imitated, else the character which they unite in forming will be lost. Lawrence, while busied with his "Rolla" and his "Hamlet," painted the portraits of,—1. Mrs. Byng; 2. Sophia Upton; 3. Caroline Upton; 4. Lady Templeton; 5. the Marchioness of Exeter; 6. Lady Conyngham; 7. Lady C. Hamilton; 8. Miss Lambe; 9. Mrs. Thellusson and Child; 10. Mrs. Williams. Some of these were ladies of distinguished beauty. There were others of pre-eminent rank and talent: the Princess of Wales, the Princess Charlotte, and, once more, Mrs. Siddons.

Of the male portraits of this time, the most remarkable was that of the eloquent Curran; under mean and harsh features, a genius of the highest order lay concealed, like a sweet kernel in a rough husk: and so little of the true man did Lawrence perceive in his first sittings, that he almost laid down his palette in despair, in the belief that he could make nothing but a common or vulgar work. The parting hour came, and with it the great Irishman burst out in all his strength: he discoursed on art, on poetry, on Ireland: his eyes flashed, and his colour heightened, and his rough and swarthy visage seemed, in the sight of the

astonished painter, to come fully within his own notions of manly beauty. "I never saw you till now," said the artist in his softest tone of voice; "you have sat to me in a mask; do give me a sitting of Curran the orator." Curran complied, and a fine portrait, with genius on its brow, was the consequence. The vehement Irishman was followed by a philosophical Scot; but I have heard no one praise his head of Sir James Mackintosh: yet it is serene and contemplative, and an excellent likeness of a most humane and worthy, as well as great man. His portraits of Lord Erskine, Lord Thurlow, Mr. Wyndham, and Sir William Grant belong to the same period. The hours of the painter were now fully employed: he rose early, and he worked late; for though no one excelled more in rapid sketches, he had a true enthusiasm for his art, and would not dismiss hastily anything for which he was to be paid as a picture. He detained his sitters often for three hours at a time; had generally eight or nine of these sittings; and all the while studied their looks anxiously, and seemed to do nothing without care and consideration. His constant practice was to begin by making a drawing of the head full size on canvas; carefully tracing in dimensions and expressions. This took up one day: on the next he began to paint; touching in the brows, the nose, the eyes, and the mouth, and finally the bounding line in succession. Lawrence sometimes, nay often, laid aside the first drawing of a head, and painted on a copy. This was from his fear of losing the benefit of first impressions, which in such cases are often invaluable. It may be added, that he stood all the while, and was seldom so absorbed in his undertaking, that he did not converse with his sitter, and feel either seriousness or humour, whilst giving thought to the brow, or beauty to the cheek. Reynolds said he loved portrait painting, for it brought him pleasant company, and required little outlay of thought.

Some of his high sitters had the address to call out the painter, the poet, and the player in succession, so much to the satisfaction of the artist, that in his letters to his friends, he would give detailed accounts of the company he had seen, and the honours which had been done him. Of

two plays acted at the seat of Lord Abercorn, in which Lawrence performed along with the Hamiltons and Lindsays, he used to give an account, Fuseli said, in the style of a stage manager. It will be enough to say, that he acted the part of Lord Rakeland, in "The Wedding Day," and of Grainger, in "Who's the Dupe?" before the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Devonshire, the Marquis of Abercorn, and Sheridan; was applauded; and imagined he gained rather than lost in the esteem of the great by this exhibition. But he had some misgivings in the matter, and wrote a long letter to his sister, declaring that he would perform in no other family, save that of his early friend Lord Abercorn; and, moreover, that Lady Cahir, now Countess of Glengall, who acted Lady Contest, was so beautiful that he felt love-making to be very easy.

He was now suspected of serious love-making in a higher quarter, and the charge made against him moved him deeply. For some time Lawrence had been a frequent guest at Montague House, Blackheath, the residence of the Princess of Wales; and as he continued his attentions after the portrait of that unfortunate lady was finished, his visits were ascribed to no proper motive. This was rigorously inquired into by commissioners appointed to investigate the general conduct of her Royal Highness. Light of heart, and of a natural levity, which disregarded the smaller delicacies of her sex; deserted, or driven away, by one who had taken upon himself the office of her protector; and with the freer than English manners of a foreign land to aggravate all; this weak Princess was exposed more than most ladies to such insinuations. From all that was criminal, the charity or the justice of the commissioners of that day entirely freed her; and the conduct of the painter would have been forgotten in a week, had not his own restiveness under the suspicion hurried him before a magistrate, to make oath that his visits arose from friendship, and were platonic and pure. From being a partaker in folly with the Princess, nay, even from all suspicion of levities, the award of Lords Grenville, Spencer, Erskine, and Ellenborough, had completely exculpated him: yet such was his sensitiveness, or his vanity, that he made

oath, that though he had sometimes been alone with the royal lady both early and late, he should not have had the least objection, had all the world heard or seen what took place. In justice to the unhappy Princess, we must lay the blame of all those insinuations respecting the visits of Lawrence to the almost incredible imprudence of the painter: he requested permission to sleep all night at Montague House, in order that he might rise betimes to work at the portraits; he made himself as acceptable as he could, and by his pleasant conversation, kept the Princess from her chamber sometimes till one or two o'clock in the mornings; and, finally, he informed a lady of the royal household, that the Princess preferred him to all other visitors. A lady—one of those who thought the poetry and the conversation of Lawrence alike inspired—whispered, in a fever of alarm, that he would surely *lose his head.*

From the period of the "Delicate Investigation" of 1806, till the death of Hoppner, in 1810, Lawrence was less heard of than usual; even his excess of sitters seems to have abated somewhat.[1] Perhaps no one credited the injurious rumours which he had condescended to repel by oath: yet something like suspicion was attached to his name; for scandal, like a reptile crawling over a bright glass, leaves a trail and a stain behind. A change had taken place in the feelings of the court: Beechey now engaged the patronage of the palace; Hoppner was still the favourite of the Prince of Wales; and Owen having come into the great market of portraiture with all the *éclat* of a successful beginner, the friends of Lawrence imagined that his popularity was on the wane. This was a lost fear; he stood still alone, and unrivalled, in the captivating department of beauty. His "Lady Elizabeth Foster,"[2] in the character of a Sibyl, among the ruins of the Temple of Tivoli, and the "Hon. Lady Hood,"[3] were equal, at least, to any

[1] Especially his female sitters, with whom he was always most successful. For a few years after this foolish scandal his portraits of ladies were only in proportion of seven, to twenty-four of the opposite sex. Hoppner's death, however, set him up again, and brought him into notice by the Regent.—Ed.

[2] Afterwards Duchess of Devonshire.

[3] Afterwards the Hon. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie, of Seaforth.

similar works from his hand; but they were the only female portraits which he exhibited during four years; a proof that the cloud still rested upon his character. His male sitters increased in numbers. 1. The Hon. Charles (now Earl) Grey. 2. Lord Amherst. 3. Lord Ellenborough. 4. Sir Joseph Banks. 5. Earl of Aberdeen. 6. William Pitt. 7. Lord Castlereagh. 8. George Canning. 9. Lord Melville. There was considerable talent visible on all these portraits; the best, perhaps, is that of Lord Aberdeen. The notorious Peter Finnerty, who had often libelled Lord Castlereagh, in his remarks on that nobleman's portrait in the "Morning Chronicle," was ironically critical:—"The portrait of Lord Castlereagh, by Lawrence, is not a likeness. It has a smug, smart, upstart, haberdasher look, of which there is nothing in his Lordship. The air, too, of the whole figure is direct and forward; there is nothing, as there ought to be, characteristically circuitous, involved, and parenthetical about it. Besides, the features are cast in quite a different mould; as a bust, Lord Castlereagh's is one of the finest we have ever seen: it would do for one of the Roman Emperors, bating the expression." Lawrence, who had not lately been handled in such sort, complained in no gentle tone. Perry, the editor, tried in vain to pacify him, and offered to make up for the offence another time; but the painter refused to be comforted.

One of his paintings of this period almost all critics concurred in admiring; this was a conversation piece, and of a family nature, containing Sir Francis Baring, his son John, and his son-in-law Charles Wall; the former, a merchant, grown grey in commerce, seems laying down the law of loss and gain to his children, who are listening with grave attention. Painters, who usually criticize by comparison, said,—"This is a fine Venetian looking picture, possessing all the luxuriance and splendour of Paul Veronese. In the centre is seen a body of fine warm colouring, of various hues and delicious tone, accompanied by so much cold colour as gives value and support to the principal, of all which the arrangement is excellent." I know not that a spectator, unacquainted with the secrets of art, and who

cares little concerning the class or school to which a work belongs, providing it has sentiment and nature, would admire this picture so much. The character of the heads is in a graver style than is common to Lawrence, and the colouring is more true to nature, and of a more massive kind than ordinary; but the whole wants that flash and glow which captivate in some of his portraits.

The professional life of a portrait painter is supposed to be unvaried and monotonous. In the story of a day, men imagine they read the history of a whole year, and perceive in the style and handling of a couple of heads, the beauties of a whole gallery. This, however, is not the case. A successful painter of this class is considered as a chief in his art; he is the favourite guest of the opulent and the noble; he is caressed by all who wish to sit at his easel: all our young gentlemen who desire to look like senators, and all our young ladies who have a wish to be numbered with nymphs and goddesses, pay him court, and are of his faction; his intercourse with princes and peers is supposed to have fitted him for presiding among his companions, and he takes, in the eyes of mankind and himself, rank over the professors of landscape and history. All this applies strictly to Lawrence: death having removed one competitor—his own skill having conquered others—and the cloud of calumnies being gradually dispersed—he stood alone, and without a rival, in the rare art of making the canvas breathe of youth, and gentleness, and beauty. He was now on the verge of middle life; his name had reached the uttermost ends of the civilized earth; he was on good terms with most of his brethren; and was looked up to as one who, by the skill of his hand, the courtliness of his manners, and his intercourse with the great, was all but the head of the Academy. Greek Street, in which he had for some time lived, began to sink in respectability of appearance as more ambitious-looking streets arose; upon which he removed to 65, Russell Square, where his household gods found a suitable sanctuary.

Here he set up his easel, never to be moved again by his own hand, and arranged his own pictures, and the fine collection which he had been for many years forming of the

drawings and studies of the great masters of modern art. His principal room was crowded with portraits in all stages of study: some had the brows, and eyes, and nose, and mouth touched in; others had the shoulders rudely added; while a third class exhibited the head exquisitely finished, swimming, as it were, in an ocean of ink, and only abiding the leisure of the artist to obtain a body. At one time I saw the heads of Scott, Campbell,[1] West, Fuseli, all awaiting their turn to be exalted upon shoulders: hundreds more seemed in the same plight, some of which never obtained such a desirable elevation.

Unlike Reynolds, he maintained no table to return the invitations of his friends. He had no expensive retinue of servants. His house, save in paintings and treasures of art, was nakedly furnished: nor did he indulge any visible luxury whatever, except keeping a carriage and a pair of horses, which, indeed, was almost necessary for one who lived so much in society. On one occasion, when he was inveigled into a dinner, he sent for a note of the dishes which had covered the table of his friend Rogers, the poet, the day before, and had precisely a similar entertainment served up to his unwelcome guests, saying,—"I have no wife to set my table in order, nor mistress to help me with her private instructions; but having seen you all happy where there was enough to eat and drink, I have ventured to try for once."

These dinner fits came seldom; he, however, did not shun an evening party in a plain way at his own house. He had many anecdotes of arts and artists, and told them on such occasions with neatness and ease. His conversation, which in public places savoured of affected courtliness

[1] "If you see Mr. Lawrence again," writes T. Campbell, the poet, "imploro him to say what he decides about my 'lovely portrait.' I have got so smoky and old looking that I wish to get back my imaginary beauty, just to see how I shall look when I grow young again in heaven. That is the merit of Lawrence's painting; he makes one seem to have got into a drawing room in the mansions of the blessed, and to be looking at oneself in the mirrors" ("Life of Campbell," vol. ii.). Lawrence had a portrait of Campbell, I know not whether it was this "lovely" one, or another engraved at his own expense, and presented the plate to the embarrassed poet in order to help him by its sale.—Ed.

and a desire to please, relaxed into truth and nature at his own fireside: his laugh was then gay and hearty, his joke ready, and his sayings and remarks had an air of originality. The room in which he saw, during an evening hour, one or two friends, was more like a museum than a private apartment: busts of his favourites were ranged around: —Flaxman, Stothard, and Fuseli, by Baily: a statue of Michael Angelo, and another of Raphael, from the hand of Flaxman, stood upon pedestals, acting as guardian angels over the drawings which he had collected of those great masters; but, indeed, of every eminent artist he had such specimens as no other person possessed; not huddled into heaps, or scattered like the leaves of the Sibyl, but arranged in fine large portfolios properly labelled and enshrined. Of the designs of Fuseli he had thousands, and loved to look over them with those who could feel their worth: every new drawing had an anecdote,—some of mirth, and some of woe: he never grew weary in talking of Fuseli.

When the painter entered upon his new establishment, it was whispered about that he who had continued to remain a bachelor during five-and-twenty years of prosperity would live so no longer, and that a lady was about to take her place at its head. But Lawrence seemed without any such domestic inclination; he loved to talk and smile, and quote verse, with the engaging or the beautiful whom he met in company, or saw as sitters; but he never carried his views farther. He now and then imagined, and that at a late period of his life, that he loved and was beloved again; but reflection removed the film, and he perhaps felt that all the ecstasy of the passion was flown away with his youth, and that the life of love was well-nigh gone. He believed, if we may trust some of his confidential letters, that at fifty he inspired love in youthful bosoms, and that he was himself more under the influence of the passion than a wise man ought ever to be. He talks, too, of suffering from woman's caprice, when graver thoughts might have been his. "Of Miss Mary,"—he thus writes when advanced in life,—"I see nothing, and wish to see nothing; hers was a light heart, and mine an erring and self-blinded

mind; yet she had virtues, and I at length have reason. Encourage me, dear madam, in my new rationality, that when I meet you again, I may tell you I have been gay and virtuous, and good." These words were addressed to a married lady; he was fond of taking such into his confidence, and loved to speak to them of imaginary woes, and the sorrow which he was enduring from the cruelty or the caprice of some captious spinster.

He was followed to his new studio by more than even the usual number of sitters. he had gradually raised his prices for portraits as he advanced in fame. In 1802 his charge for a three-quarters' size was thirty guineas; for a half-length sixty guineas; and for a whole length one hundred and twenty guineas. In 1806 the three-quarters rose to fifty guineas; and the whole length to two hundred. In 1808 he raised the smallest size to eighty guineas, and the largest to three hundred and twenty guineas: and in 1810, when the death of Hoppner swept all rivalry out of the way, he increased the price of the heads to one hundred, and the full lengths to four hundred guineas. He knew, —none better,—that the opulent loved to possess what was rare, and beyond the means of poorer men to purchase; the growing crowds of his sitters told him that his advance in price had not been ill received.

These high prices, and the vast number of his sitters, together with the humble and almost self-denying style in which he lived, failed to enrich him. Wealth fell upon him as rain into a sieve; he not only had little money in his pocket, but was frequently at a loss how to live for the day, and meet the current expenses of his establishment. No doubt, many sitters neglected to pay for their portraits when they were done; many only took a sitting or two, and not liking probably the posture in which he painted them, came no more; yet even in these cases he was a gainer, for he commonly adhered to the old rule of receiving half payment at the beginning of a portrait. There were other methods, too, of increasing his income which none knew better how to practise. He lent his portraits to be engraved for very large sums, and was most scrupulous in exacting payment; nay, he conceived that a painter

still retained a right in his work after he had been paid for it, and scarcely counted the proprietor a gentleman who allowed it to be engraved without his permission, and his sharing in the speculation. On this subject he thus replied to the queries of a brother artist of eminence—Pickersgill:—"In answer to your question, I beg you to understand that where there is not a remuneration paid to me for the use of my pictures, it is when they are obtained without my consent; or where the mere legal power of the proprietor, from the purchase of the work, is considered by him as exempting him from the necessity, or rather propriety, of any reference to me upon the subject. I fully acknowledge and assert the right of every artist to remuneration for that use of his labours which is intended to be the source of profit to others, although the picture itself may have passed from his possession. The appeal will never be made in vain by him to any proprietor of enlightened mind or gentlemanly feeling. The artist ought to have, too, the right of choosing the engraver, and of directing the work." Such was Lawrence's opinion—but assuredly the law would never support it. Where there is no right expressly reserved by the painter, the purchaser becomes the sole proprietor of the work, and, as nobody disputes his right to burn it if he pleases, how is it possible to maintain that he may not cause it to be engraved without consulting any one? Were it otherwise, there would soon be an end of the manufacture; for who would buy a painting and hold it in trust for the use and profit of others? These matters show that he was in nowise neglectful in affairs of professional profit; in truth, he was found by booksellers and engravers to be, with all his courtesy, extremely skilful in the ancient art of bargain-making, and rather hard to deal with, for all his softness of speech.

The victorious year 1814, which opened the gates of Paris to the army of the allies, also opened the doors of the Louvre to English artists; and thither, accordingly, Lawrence went, as soon as order was established, and travelling safe. His old friend, Sir Charles Stewart (now Marquis of Londonderry), who had shortly before this time succeeded in inducing the Prince Regent to overlook past

offences, and patronize Lawrence, was now at Paris, and did everything to make his visit agreeable to him. But from the treasures of the then untouched Louvre,[1] he was soon recalled by the Prince Regent. The conquerors of the Conqueror,—the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, Prince Blucher, and the Hettman Platoff were waiting to take their turns at his easel. They sat for their portraits in York House, since pulled down, and replaced by a worthier building—the splendid mansion of the Duke of Sutherland. The pictures painted in memory of the visit of those princes of the North were publicly exhibited next year, along with a portrait of Prince Metternich, and one of the Duke of Wellington[2]—the latter holding the sword of state, on the day of general thanksgiving for the return of peace. Of these, the head of Blucher, "the drunken hussar" of Napoleon's memoirs, and Platoff, with his Asiatic visage, were the best. The Prince Regent bestowed the honour of knighthood upon the painter on the 22nd of April, 1815, and assured him, that he was proud in conferring a mark of his favour on one who had raised the character of British art in the estimation of all Europe.

It was, perhaps, well for the fame of Lawrence that the nature of his studies called him frequently to use his skill on faces which had intellectual and external loveliness to recommend them. Images of gracefulness and beauty are eternal, and cannot decay: a new prince succeeds the old as naturally as dunce the second follows dunce the first in the satire of the poet, and die, and are no more; the heroes of the last gazette will be forgotten in the heroes of the next; but mental and bodily beauty are enduring things; and of these Sir Thomas has preserved many likenesses:—1. The Countess of Charlemont and her Children; 2. The Countess Grey; 3. Lady Ellenborough; 4. Lady Leinster; 5. Lady Grantham; 6. Lady Emily Cowper; 7. The Duchess

[1] "Untouched"—that is to say, before the paintings that Napoleon had taken from the various countries he had conquered had been restored. It was a great opportunity for artists to see some of the most famous paintings in Europe all collected together under one roof.—Ed.

[2] This was about the only equestrian portrait that Lawrence ever painted, and it was not very successful.—Ed.

of Sutherland; 8. Lady Wigram; 9. The Duchess of Gloucester; 10. Mrs. Arbuthnot; 11. Lady Mary Oglander; 12. Lady Auckland and Children; 13. Lady Elizabeth Leveson Gower; 14. The Daughter of the Archduke Charles of Austria; and 15. Lady Selina Meade. Of these, the Duchess of Sutherland, herself an artist of more than common talents, was remarkable for calm and totally unaffected dignity. Lady Emily Cowper (now Lady Ashley) vindicated the Italian title of the English Titian: she is, it is true, a child, but one of surpassing beauty; and her mild eyes look into one. Mrs. Arbuthnot fills up that place in female attraction between the loveliness of the teens and the matron serenity of advanced years. Sir Thomas bestowed great pains on his female portraits, and took advantage of every circumstance that could contribute to their attraction. His wonderful power as a draughtsman gave him a command over the principles of beauty. With this *beau idéal* of excellence ever in his eye, he softened down the little rudenesses of living nature, and brought the features as much as possible within the bounding line of loveliness. This—the true foundation of all that is grand in the external of art—enabled him to triumph over all opposition. He went into detail, yet did not define: he left nothing untouched which went to aid the likeness, yet he was seldom little. That he was observant in small matters, the following inquiry concerning the embellishment of one of his female portraits will sufficiently show:—"Will you, my dear friend, ask for me whether a pure white silk sash or girdle, with its rich gold fringe, would not be the most elegant of any alteration? and whether, with perfect propriety, I might not introduce a very tender rose, carelessly put in, of the purest blush, but just serving to tie together the curtain and drapery on which my lady sits? I think I can afford to tie part with the blue, or, wanting it, with a violet or two, or border above the fringe may recall it." This may seem the trifling of the artist: but there can be no doubt that the rose of purest blush, and the violets of richest dye, were necessary to make the picture harmonious in colour, and consistent in composition.

The male portraits which passed from his studio at the same period were numerous. In addition to the princes and peers already named, he painted the Earl of Lonsdale, Sir Thomas Grahame (now Lord Lynedoch), Sir Henry Englefield, Sir Charles Stewart (now Marquis of Londonderry), the Marquis Wellesley, the Duke of York, the late Marquis of Abercorn, the Prince Regent, James Watt, the Bishop of London (Dr. Howley), the Bishop of Durham (Dr. Shute Barrington), Sir Henry Torrens, the Marquis of Anglesey, the Duke of Wellington, and Antonio Canova. The portrait of the inventor of the present power of the steam-engine was, I believe, painted after death, and is every way inferior to that fine head of him from the hand of Chantrey. The great Italian artist sat to Sir Thomas, and united with him in admiring the works of Fuseli. Men often admire in others what they want in themselves. Canova and Lawrence were all softness, and grace, and propriety. Fuseli was all fire, imagination, and extravagance; calling the graces which he could not catch, "trifles;" the proprieties of art, "tamenesses;" and gentle action, "want of mental energy." He too often spoke of Lawrence as a mere "face-maker;" and called Canova an "emasculated Greek," averring that he had revived the Grecian sculpture in all but its manliness.

The discordant opinions delivered by artists and antiquarians on the merits of the Elgin marbles and their era, have been often discussed. The evidence of Lawrence, delivered in the year 1816, was pronounced at the time to be at variance with the principles on which he painted. "I am well acquainted," these are his words, "with the Elgin marbles: they are of the highest class of art; and to purchase them would be an essential benefit to the arts of this country. They would be of high importance in a line of art which I have very seldom practised; I mean, the historical: for, though I have seen the marbles in Paris, and know other figures of great name, the Elgin marbles present examples of a higher style of sculpture than any I have seen. I think they are beyond the Apollo. There is in them a union of fine composition and grandeur of form, with a *more true and natural expression of the effect*

of action upon the human frame, than there is in the Apollo, or in any other of the most celebrated statues. I consider, on the whole, the Theseus as the most perfect piece of sculpture of a single figure that I have ever seen as *an imitation of nature:* but, as an imitation of character, I would not decide, unless I knew for what the figure was intended." One critic said, "No one can read this evidence without surprise and astonishment. There stands 'the god of the unerring bow,' escaped in unmutilated majesty through all periods of war and desolation, and still moving and breathing of Olympus, with grace in every limb, and divinity on his brow: and there lies the Theseus, or a figure so called, and perhaps erroneously; wanting the face, wanting the hands, and wanting the feet; eaten by time and tempest to the bone; flayed of all external beauty, and nothing left but the mass of the statue; expressing nothing, and valuable only to artists. I cannot understand by what singularity of reasoning Sir Thomas prefers what he says he does not understand to a statue which speaks to every schoolboy, and which is the most perfect and noble of all the productions of antiquity." Here, however, there seems to have been a misapprehension of Lawrence's meaning: the question was not as to the state of preservation, or the present value of the two statues as objects of immediate gratification to the eye, but as to the *styles* in which they were originally conceived and executed. The majority of our artists agreed with Lawrence in pronouncing the Theseus to have been a closer imitation of real nature than the Apollo. The question, in short, is exactly the old one between the *beau idéal* and the *beau naturel;* and as to the corroded surface and mutilated limbs of the Theseus, will any one say that the half-obliterated Cartoon of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper" is not worth a score of the best pictures that glare annually from the walls of Somerset House? Moreover, the Apollo itself was, when first discovered, in a mutilated state.

The public honours showered upon Lawrence by almost all nations might require a chapter to themselves. They began to descend as soon as he had painted Alexander of

Russia and his veterans, and continued till he had obtained as many titles as might have satisfied a Spaniard. In addition to the honour of knighthood here, and admission to the Academy of St. Luke in Rome, he became, in 1817, a member of the American Academy of the Fine Arts, where his name was enrolled with those of Napoleon and Lucien Buonaparte, West, Canova, Wilkie, and Raeburn. This honour Sir Thomas repaid by painting a full-length portrait of their countryman, Benjamin West; and West, in return, said of Sir Thomas,—"He is not a mere portrait painter: he has invention, taste, rich colouring, and a power of execution truly wonderful." The Academy of Florence, having heard that Lawrence had painted one of his finest portraits as a present to the American Society, instantly elected him a member of the first class: but Sir Thomas, probably penetrating the motive of their kindness, sent nothing. The Academy of Venice added theirs to the number in 1823; that of Bologna followed; and Turin conferred all the dignity it had to bestow in 1826. He was, moreover, elected a member of the Imperial Academy at Vienna, and got the diploma of the Danish Academy through the personal interposition of King Christian-Frederick. Finally, he was made a chevalier of the Legion of Honour, in France, on the 20th of January, 1825; the King of England giving him leave to wear the cross of the order.

All this accumulation of honours induced not Sir Thomas to make any change in his scale of establishment; but neither, unhappily, did he make any alteration in the way of regulating his expenditure. The more he won, the more he wasted. Farington, once his monitor in money matters, was dead; what his income was he did not know;—what his outlay was, as little could he tell: and thus he went on, from day to day, and from year to year; accumulating half-finished paintings, and gathering together, at a vast outlay, all the drawings he could find of the old masters,—but never making one step to the realization of an independent fortune.

Among the gentle sitters who came to his easel there was a Mrs. Wolfe, wife of a Danish consul. She was young;

she was beautiful; she had considerable taste in art and literature: had a soft low voice like Sir Thomas himself; and having no domestic duties to perform,—for she lived apart from her husband,—had much leisure to bestow on others. This was rather a dangerous neighbour, for one who imagined that his heart was all tenderness, and who complained continually of the coldness or insensibility of the living generation of spinsters. The lady, it appears, soon took upon herself the task of condolence in the painter's entanglements of love; and as she had failed, either through her husband's fault or her own, in doing the duties of a wife, she thought herself, perhaps, the better adapted for discharging those of a friend in a pure platonic way. I know not what name she gave the artist in the voluminous correspondence which passed between them; but he called her his Aspasia, and exclaimed, "Pericles! Pericles! Pericles!" It was, perhaps, in honour of this acquaintanceship that he designed a splendid picture, representing the building of the Parthenon, with Aspasia and Pericles superintending the rising structure, and directing the sculptors, and the workers in silver, and ivory, and gold. The language of his letters was too much in keeping with the conception of this picture, which he sketched but to lay aside. Passion with him seldom spoke the language of nature and feeling: what must the fair Dane have thought of epistles such as this?—"Triumphs of conquerors, and even the deeds of heroism that secure them, have a colder spectator in me, as man and artist, than can often be found. I would rather paint Satan bursting into tears when collecting his ruined angels, than Achilles radiant in his heavenly arms, mounting his chariot, defying his destiny when announced by miracle, and rushing on devoted Troy. And fallen Rome, with its declining sun, as it was once sweetly and pathetically painted by Claude, would be more delightful in anticipation than even in its full carnival, with its tapestries hung round St. Peter's, its illuminated dome, and magnificent fireworks from the Castle of St. Angelo, with all the gorgeous accompaniments of processions and fetes."

He descended, however, sometimes from these high places

of epistolary musing, and spoke out his mind in the plainer language of a man of this world.

He complained to this fair confidant that, with the rise of his fame, enemies had risen also, who readily perceived his faults, and would not see any of his virtues. He had always been liberal, he said, towards his competitors in the race of reputation; disdained all selfish policy, all trickery of conduct, and desired to do nothing unworthy of a gentleman; yet he had the pain to find himself suspected of seeking to create an unwarrantable power in the Academy, and of "forming his squad," so that everything might be sacrificed to him; and, in short, of being called the prime mover of all injustice shown to others. "He could readily," he remarked, "refute such calumnies, and bring their propagators to shame, but he doubted the wisdom of doing so; for he might excite their hatred, which was more dreadful to him than envy. So little had he committed himself with them, that the hottest malcontents of the Academy were compelled to smile upon him, and treat him with at least external civility." Having given Mrs. Wolfe a peep at the Royal Academy, he desires her to look at his own studio, and sympathize in the sensations professional and domestic, of its troubled inhabitant. "I have the cares of overwhelming business, and all its dissatisfactions," he observed, "together with the perplexing adjustment of those encumbrances that once so nearly ruined me. I am perpetually, too, mastered by my art; and am as much enslaved by the picture I am painting, as if it had a personal existence, and obliged me to attend to it. I often throw down my pencils, saying, 'I shall do no more;' and whilst wiping my hands I see the 'little more' that is wanted, and instantly take them up again." He had a particular pride, he said, in the pictures he sent to far countries unacquainted with the higher works of art. The science of the picture would, indeed, be lost upon them; but, in time, some true critic, or great artist, might arise among them, who would feel its worth, and tell them it was a work of finished excellence. He never laboured with more care than he did for strangers whom he might never hear of again.

In his correspondence with this lady he discussed many matters,—painting, poetry, and acting. He thus powerfully dashed off the head of Byron with his pen; I wish he had done it with the brush:—"Lavater's system never asserted its truth more forcibly than in Byron's countenance, in which you see all the character: its keen and rapid genius, its pale intelligence, its profligacy and its bitterness; its original symmetry distorted by the passions; his laugh of mingled merriment and scorn; the forehead clear and open, the brow boldly prominent, the eyes bright and dissimilar, the nose finely cut, and the nostril acutely formed; the mouth well made, but wide, and contemptuous even in its smile, falling singularly at the corners, and its vindictive and disdainful expression heightened by the massive firmness of the chin, which springs at once from the centre of the full under lip; the hair dark and curling, but irregular in its growth: all this presents to you the poet and the man; and the general effect is heightened by a thin spare form, and, as you may have heard, by a deformity of limb." The beauteous dame did not approve of the darker shades of this sketch. She worshipped Byron with all his faults, and repeated some of the tenderer passages of his poetry with taste and feeling.

The story of this Mrs. Wolfe fills more space than it can deserve to do in a preceding biography of Lawrence. I am no ready believer in platonics, particularly where the man is a bachelor and the lady is living separately from her husband; but at a time when she might have just as well remained in London, where alone she could meet Sir Thomas, Mrs. Wolfe retired to Wales; and this fact, with some other private circumstances within my knowledge, induces me to reject the story that their friendship was defiled by sensuality. I am willing, indeed, to believe, with a lady who knew him well, that

"His love lay most in talking."

That Lawrence was an accomplished gossip, his own account of his nine days' visit to Claremont would be quite enough to prove. He was commissioned, it seems, in 1817, to paint a second portrait of the Princess Charlotte; and,

having set up his easel, and prepared his palette publicly, he took up his pen privately, and gave a long minute detail of the doings of the Princess and her household. This was rather imprudent; for his business was with his brush. A portrait painter, or indeed any man, who is admitted to the privacies of any family, should consider himself as in a confidential capacity, and close his lips, and abstain from all private gossip. It is true that the Princess, a kind-hearted young creature, had no secrets she wished concealed: but I question whether she would have liked to have her little innocent endearments with her husband related by a pen so minutely trifling as that of Mrs. Wolfe's correspondent. The chief blame, however, must be with those that first published what Lawrence wrote. "The Princess," says this chronicler of Claremont, "is wanting in elegance of deportment; but has nothing of the hoiden, or that boisterous hilarity which has been ascribed to her. Her manner is frank and simple; and, if she does nothing gracefully, she does everything kindly. She loves and respects Prince Leopold, and is more in dread of his opinion than of his displeasure. Their mode of life is very regular; they breakfast together at eleven, at half-past twelve she sits to me, the Prince staying with her most of the time; about three she leaves the painting-room to take an airing about the grounds in a low phaeton and ponies, the Prince walking by her side; at five she comes in, and sits to me till seven; dinner is then served; after the dessert has appeared, the Prince and Princess retire to the drawing-room, whence we soon hear the piano-forte accompanying their voices." This is a pretty picture; but it is only a "bit" of the large conversation piece which Sir Thomas sketched. His oil picture of the Princess was natural, and even graceful: there was nothing of the imputed Elizabeth about Charlotte: she had a gentle, an affectionate, and a domestic look, and would have sat enthroned in all hearts had she lived. She purposed to present this picture to her husband on his birthday, but died before the time came.

The pencil of Lawrence was soon afterwards called from domestic employment to labour for the State. Napoleon

had struck his last blow on his bloodiest field; the sovereigns of Europe had despatched him to perish on his distant rock, and were holding holiday, in the mood of a brood of chickens no longer scared with the shadow of the eagle's wings. They had met at Aix-la-Chapelle, to arrange the affairs of the world; and it was the pleasure of the Regent of England that his painter should hasten to the royal head-quarters, and execute portraits of the principal personages for the gallery at Windsor. In order that he might appear in a style worthy of the first maritime power in Europe, a thousand a year was allowed him for contingent expenses. The portraits were to be painted at the usual price, and meantime advances were made upon them with most munificent liberality. When the Aix-la-Chapelle part of the commission should be completed, he engaged to go to Rome on the same conditions, and paint the Pope, and one or two of his cardinals.

Of those princes and rulers of the earth he now painted Francis, Emperor of Austria, Louis XVIII. and Charles X., successively kings of France, the Archduke Charles, Prince Metternich, General Tchernicheff, General Ouvaroff, Baron Hardenberg, Count Nesselrode, Baron Gentz, Earl Bathurst, the Earl of Liverpool, Robert Marquis of Londonderry, the Duke of Cambridge, and Mr. Canning. The whole collection of the *European* portraits which he painted for George IV. amounted in number to twenty-four. Concerning his labours on the looks of the eminent foreigners who sat to him at this time, Lawrence was very communicative in his correspondence; but it must be confessed that he was much too fond of setting down titles at all their length; of describing public entertainments; of noting the idle etiquette and diplomatic minutiæ of courts and assemblies; he dazzles his distant friends with stars, and ribands, and orders, and introduces a thousand trifles beneath the notice of anybody but a determined tire-woman.[1]

[1] Lawrence exacted a great number of sittings even from these illustrious sitters. He records that the poor old Pope sat to him nine times, the Emperor of Austria seven, the Emperor of Russia seven, and the King of Prussia six times. This was nothing to the number of sittings

It was the pleasure of the Emperor of Russia to be represented in the close green hussar uniform which he had worn at the battle of Leipsic, and, moreover, he chose his own posture—the least imperial of any posture in which a man could be painted. His close green dress, his round cropped head, and his stooping position, all unite against him. The artist allowed him, of course, to have his own high will; and the portrait has suffered accordingly. The Emperor of Austria allowed Lawrence to choose his posture, and the picture is a masterpiece in every respect: the features anything but good, but the expression mild, and the whole air that of a paternal monarch. The head of the Archduke Charles is that of a fine, eager, soldier-like, undismayed man. "The Emperor Francis," said the painter, "has a face, when speaking, of benevolence itself, and that expression I have been happy enough to catch. The King of Prussia is taller than either, but with more reserve of manner; he has good features, and is of a sincere and generous nature." The Emperor of Austria gave him a superb diamond ring; the King of Prussia gave him another, with his initials in the centre. These were proud days for Lawrence, and he was not insensible of them. Emperors praised, empresses flattered, kings made presents, and all manner of courtly commendations descended upon the man who had the looks of monarchs in his power, as much as ever Napoleon had their thrones.

From Aix-la Chapelle Lawrence went to Vienna to paint the portrait of Schwartzenberg and other imperial generals. He admired the emperor's gallery, and in particular the Theodosius of Rubens, touched upon by Vandyke, and the better for every touch. Count Capo d'Istrias was the best portrait which he painted there, and the head of young Napoleon the prettiest drawing.[1] His pencil gave great

he required sometimes from ordinary mortals who came to his studio. It must be remembered, however, that his portraits have this merit, that all parts were equally finished from life. His hands, as Sir Walter Scott notes, are always thoroughly individual and carefully painted. In matters of costume also he was very particular.—Ed.

[1] Thomas Moore writes in his diary, "Nov. 13, 1819. Lawrence showed me his portrait of young Napoleon, which is highly interesting:

satisfaction; and the artist himself was popular. He rose early and laboured hard and late, and was often much exhausted. Sir Thomas wrote long letters upon balls and parties, and the looks of great men; but though he visited the Gallery of the Belvedere four times, he has not spared us more than one remark; nor has he said one word about the state of art in Austria. He packed up all his painting apparatus, and, on the 3rd of May, 1819, departed for Rome.

It was between six and seven o'clock in a fine clear morning that he first saw the dome of St. Peter's: he drove right into the heart of this "Niobe of nations," and, looking around, was surprised to see the city so small, and all its architecture on a scale much below what his imagination had pictured. "Tell Thomson and Howard," said he, "that I found Rome small; but if they are indignant at this, tell them the injustice has been amply punished; for I am at this moment overpowered with its immensity and grandeur." He visited the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican; and, having mused over their beauties, declared, that when endeavouring to judge between Michael Angelo and Raphael, the former bore down upon him with the force of lightning. "Truth and elegance could not withstand the sublime. There was something so lofty and abstracted in those deities of intellect with which Angelo had peopled the Sistine Chapel, which converted the noblest personages of Raphael's drama into an audience silent and awe-struck. Raphael never produced aught equal to the Adam and Eve of Michael Angelo. Though the latter is the mother of mankind, there is nothing heavy or masculine; all is elegant as the lines of the finest flower." The remains of the early grandeur of Rome began, as his imagination became less excited, to appear in their proper hue and dimensions. All was on a vast scale, and conveyed such an idea of power, and habitual notions of the magnificent and great, that it appeared more the work of a higher

a beautiful child full of thoughtfulness and simplicity; a fine subject for verses; the past, the present, and the future all contained in it" ("Life of Moore," vol. iii.).—Ed.

scale of being than of man. The very pavement seemed laid by a race of giants. If he was pleased with the works of the dead, he was equally pleased with the attentions of the living. The Pope, Cardinal Gonsalvi, and the eminent Canova, all united in honouring the distinguished Englishman.

Pius VII., a mild old man, sat for his portrait first.[1] He was introduced to His Holiness in a small closet in the Quirinal Palace; made his obeisance by bending the knee, and was then left alone with him. "He has a fine countenance," said Lawrence; "stoops a little; with a firm yet sweet-toned voice, and, as I believe, is within a year or two of eighty; and through all the storms of the past he retains the jet-black of his hair." The old man disliked to speak French, perhaps from remembering his captivity; and he loved to speak English, of which he knew but little, from a sense of the kindness of that nation towards him. Cardinal Gonsalvi, the Pitt of Rome, as the painter not inaptly called him, absolutely delighted Lawrence. "He is," says the painter, "one of the finest subjects for a picture that I ever had,—a countenance of powerful intellect, and great symmetry: his manners but too gracious: the expression of every wish was pressed upon me, and the utterance of every complaint." Amid all this complaisance and honour, he could not but feel that he was but the more set up as a mark for envy to shoot her shafts at; and he cautioned a friend to whom he unbosomed himself how he talked in London of his labours and honours abroad. "Your knowledge of human nature," said he, "will tell you how much of prosperity is to be veiled, if we would have any but one's best friends sympathize in it." His portrait of Cardinal Gonsalvi is by far the finest of all the works which he painted during this long journey: the background is all

[1] Sir Walter Scott, writing of this portrait of the Pope to Wilkie, says of it:—"I fancied, if I had seen only the hand, I could have guessed it not only to be the hand of a gentleman and person of high rank, but of a man who had never been employed in war or in the sports by which the better classes generally harden and roughen their hands in youth. It was and could be only the hand of an old priest, which had no ruder employment than bestowing benedictions."—ED.

clear Italian nature, and the figure which it relieves, and projects, as it were, into the air, is all mental power, and that beauty which belongs to thought. Nor is the picture of the Pope much inferior. The painter seems to have been inspired by the air of Rome, and the presence of the sublime creations of art around.

He who admired the sublime and the severe Michael Angelo could not have much sympathy to spare for the soft and graceful Canova; and accordingly we find little or no praise bestowed upon the works of that eminent master. The portrait of the Italian Phidias, as he was called, which Lawrence had done hastily in England, he repainted more at his leisure in Rome; and with such skill did he seize the manly features of the swarthy Italian, and manage the crimson velvet, the damask, the gold, and the marble, which he lavished on the picture, that thousands, it is said, crowded to see it. Lawrence, with good taste, presented this fine work to the Pope. "It may be cited," says a person then in Rome, "as the most poetical, elegant, enthusiastic delineation of acute genius, without flattery, that has ever been executed. Its animation is beyond all praise. 'Per Baccho, che uomo è questo!' I heard Canova cry out when it was mentioned." The deep clear colouring of the head, and the manliness of the expression, render it one of the finest pictures of modern times. Lawrence avoids instituting any comparisons between Canova and Michael Angelo: he was, however, much delighted with the famous Venus, for which Napoleon's fair and frail sister, Pauline, is said to have been the model. The statue was displayed by torchlight—a mode which shows the lucid brilliancy of the marble, conceals such spots or faint veins as nature may have mingled with its formation, and affords such strong and changeable light and shade as sculpture in a milk-white material requires.

Amid all the splendour of art at Rome, his heart and thoughts often went back to England. All he saw, and he saw much; all he admired, and that was not limited, could not lower Reynolds in his estimation; nay, his love of his works seemed to increase daily: and though he still

considered Michael Angelo as the head of all that was sublime, he looked upon Raphael, Correggio, Titian, and Reynolds as the gods in art at whose shrines he should hereafter bend. "How fine," he exclaimed, "was our Sir Joshua! How we know him now, when we see the sources of his greatness, and remember how often he surpassed their usual labours; and in his own country, and in Europe, against prejudice and ignorance how firmly and alone he stood!" Of Turner, too, though an opponent to him in the Academy, he spoke in terms of no ordinary praise.[1] "Turner should come to Rome: he has an elegance and often a greatness of invention, which wants a scene like this."

After remaining much longer in Italy than he intended, and consequently seeing more works of genius than he had expected, he returned to England, having left behind him, wherever he went, admiration of his talents, and respect for his character and manners. The following works were over and above the portraits and sovereigns and chiefs, the fruit of his foreign tour:—1. The Archduchess, wife of the Archduke Charles; 2. Princess Metternich; 3. Child of the Archduke; 4. Child of Count Fries: these were in oil. His drawings were:—1. Princess Rosamoffsky; 2. Countess Thurskeim; 3. Madame Sauren; 4. Lady Meade; 5. Princess Lichnowsky; 6. Mademoiselle Ricci: 7. Countess Esterhazy; 8. Count Esterhazy: 9. The younger Prince Schwartzenberg.

Lawrence loved afterwards to recall Rome to his memory: it is thus he writes, in 1828, to a young painter, then residing in the Eternal City, whose powers he admired:—"You inform me that you have been making sketches of

[1] Though an opponent perhaps as to Academy business, Turner once performed a nobly unselfish action for the sake of Lawrence. At the Academy exhibition of 1826 a picture of his—a view of Cologne—was hung between two portraits by Lawrence, which it entirely killed by its fierce glowing colour. When the exhibition was opened, however, Turner's picture was found to be all dull and dirty-looking A friend deeply concerned rushed up to him to ask what had happened. "Oh," muttered Turner, "poor Lawrence was so unhappy. It's only lampblack: it'll wash off after the exhibition." He had purposely spoilt the effect of his own work to prevent it interfering with Lawrence's.—Ed.

the peasantry, their costumes, &c. &c. You are right in keeping up this attention to the human figure, since it will not only be a great advantage to the introduction of it in your landscapes, but from the increased difficulty of its study it will exceedingly enlarge your power of copying inanimate nature. The best historical painters have always been good painters of landscape; and, perhaps, there are examples in Titian of a greater style in that department of art than can be found in the Poussins. I would add Claude, but that he is so exclusively devoted to the beautiful (or to that species of grandeur united to it), as not properly to have a place in the comparison. I am now about to ask you to employ your genius in landscape for me. If the evenings are still of the same beautiful serenity which I remember, will you give one of their happiest effects to a general view from the front terrace of San Pietro, in Montorio? I used often to drive up there for the delighted admiration which the grand expansion of that scenery so constantly excited. It reminded me of Milton's fine description of Rome in the 'Paradise Regained.' A faithful delineation of that scene, touched with your usual finishing and pure taste, would be much valued by me, and, I need not say, possessed by me at your own price. Do not, however, let me fetter you by this commission, nor, above all, break in upon the rational happiness of your stay at Rome. Be free as air in your choice of subject, so that you employ your talents; and do not lose this spring-time of your life, which, from your present residence, will hereafter appear its happiest epoch." On the same subject, to the same painter, he afterwards writes:—"You will oblige me much by executing my little commission for me: your powers are now in their youthful vigour; and there is a truth, delicacy, and refinement in your drawings, that, except in our greatest artist, I have seen in no other. From my own recollection, a sunset or evening is the finest moment of that glorious scene."

Sir Thomas was something more than eighteen months away on this foreign expedition, for he did not arrive in England till the 20th of March, 1820. Events of some importance had occurred in his absence. George III.

was dead; and George IV., the most munificent patron of art since Charles I., reigned in his stead. Benjamin West, too, the President of the Royal Academy, had expired, full of years and honours; and the first intimation which he received of this event was, that he was to be elected in his place.[1] The King welcomed him back, and was grateful for the treasures which he brought. The Royal Academy also welcomed him; and, when he took the chair among his brethren, there were few who did not acknowledge that, for reputation in art, for manners, and for all those acquirements which give a lustre to station, the choice could not have been amended. Even Fuseli, who had such fine taste as seldom to be satisfied with anything, growled out his approbation in these words:—"Well, well! since *they* must have a face-painter to reign over them, let them take Lawrence; he can, at least, paint eyes!" Sir Thomas, himself, received the information with moderate rapture, and said,—"There are others better qualified to be President. I shall, however, discharge the duties as well and wisely as I can. I shall be true to the Academy; and, in my intentions, just and impartial." The King, in giving his sanction to the choice of the Academicians, added a gold chain and medal of himself, inscribed thus:—"From His Majesty, George IV., to the President of the Royal Academy." The elevation of Lawrence gave general satisfaction. His genius could not be disputed; but, in truth, genius is not the first requisite for such a place. The great object is to find a man of the world, and a gentleman,—one acquainted with the etiquette of the station,—a master of his temper and his tongue—prudent, sagacious, sensible, and conciliatory.

His station now enabled Lawrence, more than before, to befriend youthful talent; and his advice, his patronage,

[1] This could scarcely have been. West died on March 11, 1820; Lawrence was in Paris at the time, and must have heard of the event immediately, for he hurried home to be present at the funeral, but was too late. He did not arrive in London until the 30th of March. There were only two dissentient voices to his election as President, which took place on the same evening that he returned after an absence of eighteen months.—Ed.

and his purse were ever ready at its call. His advice, of which he was profuse, was eagerly courted by all who imagined themselves skilful enough to master his trick of colour and character, by which he had risen so high. His protection was desired by many who, mistrusting their own strength, sought distinction by being reckoned amongst his followers; and his purse was ever in the hands of a swarm of those unprincipled adventurers who care not what hand feeds them, so they be fed. It is said, that when money was in his pocket he dealt it freely among all applicants — whether mendicant artists or importunate creditors; and that some of the former found, when they opened his sealed envelope, that, instead of the five pounds which they had solicited, they had obtained fifty. To supply this daily drain upon his income, he was driven to become importunate in money matters himself. Having received one moiety of the price for a portrait, he was frequently obliged to apply for the other before the work was done; and his correspondence with Sir Robert Peel, the greatest patron, under a prince, the painter ever had, is chiefly remarkable for the neat way in which he plays the politician about payment, and solicits the price before the appearance of the picture. He frequently alludes to his utter carelessness in money matters, and seems willing to think it a symptom of something high-souled, and more than commonly intellectual: and so it was, had he contented himself with only squandering his income; but a man who plunges into debt, that he may indulge his generosity of nature, is in danger of being liberal at the expense of others. It is, however, my duty to add, that I could point out various instances in which Lawrence's natural delicacy of feeling made him decline to receive money, which was unquestionably his due.

So much was the President influenced with a wish to befriend the youthful and the deserving in art, that he proposed converting his house into a sort of private academy, to which pupils might resort for study and instruction. This might have been a beneficial arrangement. His time, much wasted in accidental conversations and unexpected interviews, would, when distributed with prudence among

the students, have left him as much leisure as ever for his pencil; and, moreover, much of his own subordinate work might have been done by the pupils whom his advice was befriending. From this plan probably he expected to rear up a school of his own. He was heard to talk with enthusiasm of what might be done by the genius of one "superior disciple" or two; of the society which it would bring him: and he went so far as to consult Smirke, the architect, concerning the transformation of his house into a series of studios and galleries. But many a plan looks feasible on paper, or in conversation, which cannot be carried into effect. The change proposed was very expensive, and required time. Money, with Lawrence, could not be had without labour; and how was he to work when the bricklayers and carpenters were in his house? besides, time with him was money, and so could not be spared. The plan was relinquished, and not without a struggle.

We know not what the worth of his instructions might have been, when he had the palette on his thumb, the pencil in his hand, and his pupil and canvas beside him;[1] but it was generally allowed that little could be learned from the addresses, which, as President, he was obliged to deliver, along with the medals, annually, to the students.[2]

[1] There is various testimony to the fact that Lawrence was not at all a good teacher. Etty, who was articled to him at the cost of a hundred guineas, records that he received very little assistance from his master, whose time was too much occupied to bestow any thought on his pupils. "I was left," Etty writes, "to struggle with the difficulties of art and execution; for Lawrence's execution was *perfect, playful* yet *precise*, elegant yet *free*." In despair of attaining to this perfection, poor Etty was "ready to run away." "I was almost beside myself," he says, "Here was the turn of my fate." Lawrence seems never to have given him the least encouragement or assistance, only to have employed him on preparing his canvasses, and told him to imitate his "perfection." —ED.

[2] Of his first discourse Wilkie writes thus to Andrew Geddes:—"We scarcely expected Sir Thomas would have ventured with a discourse, having had but short notice of our wish to have one; but he produced one ready written, which he delivered, however, almost extempore, in an elegant and gentlemanlike manner—simple and agreeable, without display, and, as Fuseli said, more like a pulpit discourse than that of a lecture room. We are all much satisfied with it, but regard it more as

He was too fond of flowery language; and wrote and spoke in a style far too fine and diplomatic for instruction. Some of his remarks are, nevertheless, worthy of remembrance. "Your own good taste," he says to the students, "will remind you, that we are to judge of works by the *presence* of beauties, not by the absence of defects; and that, even if it fully reached the faultlessness of the character, the picture which should exhibit only the 'coldly correct' would with difficulty obtain our sanction. As nothing can compensate for the entire want of original power, so the superior value we assign to it will command our decision in its favour, where considerable ability is not distant. Your judges are but students of a higher form. The obstacles we have ourselves to encounter remind us of the difficulties that await you; and we limit our expectations of your success by the uncertainty of our own. It is a part of the triumph of our art, that it is slow in progress; and that, although there are frequent examples of its youthful promise, there are none of youthful excellence. Even the early paintings of Raphael bear no comparison, in finished merit, with the juvenile productions of the poet—with those of our own country, Milton, Pope, and Cowley."

"I may say with safety," writes a now well-known painter, "that Sir Thomas Lawrence was one of the best friends I ever had. I found him at all times most ready and liberal in his advice and visits; and when the oppressive number of his engagements would not allow him to go out of the house, he would always see the humblest student at home. I had the pleasure of making him a great number of drawings in water colours—always sketches done on the spot; and I know he frequently conferred this honour upon me, more to assist and encourage my exertions than from any wish to possess the drawings themselves: and for all I did for him in this way he paid me at the moment,

a good beginning than as a complete piece of elocution. It was somewhat desultory, put together hastily, and without an experienced eye for arrangement, and his selection of the great masters for *expression*, viz. Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Domenichino, and Rembrandt, has been a little critized both for one that it includes, and some that it leaves out."—Ed.

and always handsomely; generally more than any one else who encouraged me. He never lost an opportunity of recommending my drawings and paintings among his distinguished friends; and I am even now feeling the effects of this generosity."

When he gave instructions to the students, he privately intimated to some of the most promising that they might visit his house, and look at the collection which he had made from masters ancient and modern. Well might Lawrence say his collection was unequalled in Europe. Besides the cartoons of Da Vinci, and drawings by Rembrandt and Rubens, and other great masters, he possessed one hundred and twenty first rate drawings by Michael Angelo, and upwards of two hundred by Raphael. These are the parent drawings of the most famous finished paintings: they have in them what no painting can teach,—the workings of the mind, the birth of the design, and its slow growth from incomplete conception to the highest excellence and beauty. On this splendid collection he had expended much time, and so much money, that, though he himself valued it at twenty thousand pounds, his friends imagined it could not have cost him less than fifty thousand; and, indeed, they did not hesitate to ascribe to his love of gathering such rarities all the pecuniary difficulties under which he laboured. I cannot, however, persuade myself that it cost him so dear. Numbers were given to him; numbers were obtained at moderate prices; and though he certainly paid large prices for some, he was probably near the truth in the sum which he mentioned.[1]

Of his admiration for these relics of the old masters, we find abundant proof in his letters to Mrs. Foster, the accomplished daughter of Banks the sculptor, who inherited her father's collection of drawings. "I can truly say"—

[1] It is curious that at the sale held after his death, Lawrence's collection fetched very nearly what he had himself estimated it at, viz., £20,000. It is a thousand pities that this magnificent collection was not acquired intact for the British Museum, as he had desired. It was however broken up, and most of its treasures sold to private purchasers. The Michelangelo and Raphael's drawings passed however to the University of Oxford.—Ed.

thus writes Lawrence—"that, from the earliest days of my youth, I might almost have said childhood, those relics of the great masters have had attractions for me: and at fourteen, the study of the large print of 'Georgio Mantuano,' from Michael Angelo, led me to make drawings of colossal size from 'Paradise Lost;' in which, unless I greatly err, I should even now find some degree of merit. The drawings have arrived safe. The three which perhaps I admire most, are, a drawing of a couple of Torsos, by Michael Angelo, with some of his writing; a drawing (profile) of a female head with pen, by Raphael, with, at the further side of the drawing, a study in chalk of drapery. These, with a sheet of limbs by Michael Angelo, are what I chiefly *like*—covet not being a word in our vocabulary. A very good drawing is assigned to Titian, which, I believe, is by Annibal Carracci. Several of the drawings are very interesting. I have forgotten to mention sooner a drawing in heads with red chalk, by Michael Angelo, which I like very much, and a small drawing by Raphael of a virgin and child. Drawings by Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Parmegiano are now become very scarce. There are some drawings of theirs here of the finest character; but all are not, I apprehend, by those great masters that are marked." He caused tracings to be made of all those fine works, placed them in his collection, and returned the originals. I know not whether his gentle hint about what he *liked* but dared not *covet*, had any influence on the proprietress. He thus writes to her:—"I wish that the one talent which I possess could, by any one of its efforts, bribe you to send me the remainder of the drawings (the dangers of the sea were dreaded). I would, too proud to have it in your possession, send you a drawing or picture by me not exceeding the dimensions of my 'Satan,' which would be rather inconvenient for your boudoir. I would even accompany it with bad verse, and that is the very rarest thing that I ever inflict upon my friends. You see in this the genuine spirit of self-sacrifice that this selfish craving has excited in me." Thus adjured, Mrs. Forster complied; and before she could pack up the drawings the following letter reached her:—"I will not suffer a post to elapse without

thanking you for your kind delightful letter, and expressing the esteem I feel for so amiable a nature. You mention your intended selection. Beware of its being too select. If you should leave out a Michael Angelo when you think it an Ostade—a Raphael, when you believe it to be a Teniers! Recollect that Rembrandt comes within my circle of the great, and that I endure the sight of a Parmegiano and Claude. Would we could have the sight, at this moment (Nov. 31), of the skies of the latter! But all is gloom here, except the mind, from which many of its clouds have been dispersed by your letter, and by the revival of a father's genius in his daughter's accomplishments and goodness." In acknowledgment of Mrs. Forster's kindness, he presented her with a very fine drawing of her daughter; and sent along with it a sketch made when he was a child, with "Thomas Lawrence, Devizes," written under it; and on one side, "Done when three *weeks* old, I believe." Nor did his memory of the obligation end here. The Reverend Mr. Forster died; and when Sir Thomas was informed that his widow was about to publish two volumes of his sermons, he wrote and enclosed fifty pounds, the amount, he said, of subscriptions for the work, which he had obtained among his friends: but when the names of the subscribers were requested, that the books might be forwarded, he gave only two or three, saying he had lost the rest, and begged to be forgiven for his carelessness. In this delicate manner he aided one every way worthy.

He was now at the full height of professional and personal reputation, and all that he had to fear was the rising of some new star in the firmament of art, to wile away his fair and fickle customers. In manliness he had rivals; in loveliness none. It was during those days of perhaps painful popularity that Lord Byron thus took note of him:—"Jan. 5, 1821.—The same evening I met Lawrence, the painter, and heard one of Lord Grey's daughters play on the harp so modestly and ingeniously that she looked music. I would rather have had my talk with Lawrence, who talked delightfully, and heard the girl, than have had all the fame of Moore and me put together. The only pleasure of fame is, that it paves the way to pleasure; and

the more intellectual, the better for the pleasure and for us too." Lawrence, however, knew how to be silent when the occasion called for deferential respect. I dined along with him and Sir Walter Scott at the table of the venerable Dr. Hughes. He said little, and seemed chiefly anxious to hear the great poet, who certainly spoke in a way to charm every ear. The painter objected, in a most gentle way, to persons criticizing works of art who were not themselves artists. "Nay," said the poet; "consider, art professes but to be a better sort of nature; and, as such, appeals to the taste of the world: surely, therefore, a wise man of the world may judge its worth, and feel its sentiment, though he cannot produce it. He may not know how it is produced; yet I see not but that he may estimate its beauty." Sir Thomas smiled, and said, "Certainly." The conversation took another turn.

Lawrence was at this period painting portraits of distinguished persons for the gallery of Sir Robert Peel, whose wish it was to have the heads of the chief men of his own time in arts, arms, and literature. The painter died before all this was accomplished: but he lived long enough to finish many noble paintings, fourteen I believe in all. The chief of these are the Duke of Wellington, Canning, the Earl of Aberdeen, Mr. Huskisson, Lord Eldon, Lord Stowell, Sir Robert Peel, and Southey. Sir Walter Scott, Chantrey, and others were to have been added, but it was otherwise fated. In the full lengths of Lawrence there is less of true nature in the posture than of fine character in the face. I am not sure that I ever saw one of them wholly free from affectation. Canning holds up his closed hand in the attitude of passionately haranguing; but introducing the seats for other senators, left blank, was a fault both in taste and in *fact*,—for Canning never spoke to empty benches. When I saw it first, there was a white handkerchief waving in the lifted hand; but this he had the good sense to rub out. Southey is seated at the foot of one of his Cumberland crags, with one knee laid over the other, and the hands between. On my asking the poet how he came to be painted in such a Jaques-like position, he said, "Why, seeing me, as I sat

cross-legged, place my hands on one knee and under the other, he asked me 'if that was the way in which I was sometimes accustomed to sit.' I smiled, and confessed to it; upon which, Lawrence transferring the brush to his palette hand, slapt his thigh, and said with a look of great satisfaction, 'Then I'll have it!'" The face is very like, but it wants that fine expression of eye, which made Byron, in one of his honest moods, pronounce the Laureate the most epic looking of all living bards. The most exquisite, however, of all the paintings in Sir Robert's collection is the portrait of Lady Peel herself, in a hat and feather; painted unquestionably as a companion to the far-famed "Chapeau de Paille" of Rubens, but surpassing it in modest domestic loveliness, and rivalling it even in the rich harmony of its colouring. When I looked at this and the others hung round the walls, I could not help thinking with Burns,—

> "His 'prentice han' he tried on man,
> And then he made the lasses!"

The names and titles of the fair and noble ladies, whom he painted during the last ten years of his life, would fill pages. On their looks his fame will chiefly depend: they merit therefore a fuller notice than what a mere catalogue exhibits. I shall name them as he painted them:—1. Mrs. Baring and Children; 2. Lady Louisa Lambton (now Lady Durham); 3. Viscountess Pollington (now Countess of Mexborough) and Child; 4. The Countess of Blessington; 5. The Countess of Jersey; 6. Duchess of Gloucester; 7. Mrs. Harford; 8. Princess Sophia; 9. Lady Vallecourt; 10. Marchioness of Lansdowne; 11. Hon. Mrs. Hope (now Lady Beresford); 12. Viscountess Melville; 13. Miss Croker; 14. Lady Lyndhurst; 15. Miss Peel; 16. Countess Gower and her Daughter; 17. Marchioness of Londonderry and her Son; 18. Lady Georgiana Agar Ellis (now Lady Dover), and her Son; 19. Miss Macdonald; 20. Duchess of Richmond; 21. Marchioness of Salisbury; 22. Mrs. Locke; 23. Lady Belfast; 24. Donna Maria de Gloria; 25. Miss Murray. Of these the most exquisitely lovely were the maternal portraits. A young mother, with her

child on her knee, is the finest of all earth's visions, and well, and with a magic beauty, has Lawrence endowed some of his. The Countess Gower (now Marchioness of Stafford) and her fair-haired Child, Lady Georgiana Agar Ellis and Child, and the Marchioness of Londonderry and her Son, are blameless things: the eyes of the mothers are beaming with love, and those of the children with affection and health. Of the single figures, that of Miss Croker (now Mrs. Barrow) is all airiness and grace: men stood before it in a half circle, admiring its loveliness, in the Exhibition. That of Lady Blessington, too, is finely painted. Lord Byron was induced to lift up his voice in its praise—but not with his usual inspiration:—

"Were I now as I was, I had sung
What Lawrence has painted so well;
But the strain would expire on my tongue,
And the theme is too soft for my shell.

"I am ashes where once I was fire,
And the bard in my bosom is dead:
What I loved I now merely admire,
And my heart is as grey as my head.

"Let the young and the brilliant aspire
To sing what I gaze on in vain,
For sorrow has torn from my lyre
The string which was worthy the strain."

Lawrence, however, failed occasionally even when he had the finest subjects. His "Lady Lyndhurst" was one striking instance of this, and his "Lady Salisbury" another.

Of sterner subjects we must now speak; and, in my opinion, the pencil which laid the lily and the rose on the ladies with a softness which rivalled the hand of nature, was less successful with the deeper hues and severer aspect of man. It would seem, nevertheless, that few were of that opinion, for male sitters crowded to him more and more: and amongst them were some of the most accomplished men of the three kingdoms. The list of his exhibited pictures alone is large, and among these the men of rank and genius are numerous. 1. John Abernethy,

Surgeon; 2. Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls; 3. Marquis of Londonderry (again); 4. Sir Humphry Davy; 5. Benjamin West; 6. Canning (again); 7. Earl of Aberdeen; 8. Lord Stowell (again); 9. Duke of Wellington (once again); 10. Croker; 11. Earl of Liverpool; 12. Sir Walter Scott; 13. Earl Grey; 14. John Nash; 15. Sir Astley Cooper, Surgeon; 16. Earl of Eldon; 17. Lord Durham; 18. Thomas Campbell; 19. Thomas Moore; 20. Henry Brougham; 21. John Soane; 22. Henry Fuseli; 23. Sir Thomas Lawrence. Of these four-and-twenty portraits, the one most to our liking is that of John Wilson Croker; it is the express image of the man;—shrewd, keen, sarcastic, and intellectual, the eye seems to look through one. His "Sir Walter Scott" has also been much praised: it is certainly very like, but wants the manly massive vigour of the heads of the same illustrious poet by Raeburn. When I saw it first, the head alone was finished, all the surrounding ground was dark, and I thought it much more like than when the shoulders and body were added. "Tell Lawrence," said an artist of high name, "to let the portrait of your friend Scott stand as it is; it is full of character and mental vigour, all of which he will diminish if he paints the body. The poet's frame, as *he will paint it*, will pull the sentiment out of the face." The head of Campbell cost the painter some pains; the changing expression of his mouth, which puzzled others, was fixed at last in his true character by the hand of Lawrence; and the head of Moore, with its smart and sensitive look, was hit off with equal happiness. This picture, done for Mr. Murray, of Albemarle Street, was, I believe, his very last labour. Fuseli's head was left unfinished; it had much of the flighty, imaginative, and discontented expression of the original;—the horrent hair, and the eye that no outline could please since the days of Michael Angelo, marked out the man amid the multitude of Sir Thomas's incomplete likenesses. His "Sir Humphry Davy" was less happy; it has the lineaments, but not the strength of the man. Perhaps Davy would have been better done had he sat later in life. Soane was old enough; indeed he was grown too feeble; but we are glad to get

the portrait of a man of genius upon any terms. Brougham is good; with this head the painter was sorely puzzled; it was young, at least not old, but came not within the academic line of manly beauty; and the expression—a compound of sneer, sarcasm, unbounded wit, and of eloquence that knows no limit, was something at once new and difficult. The portrait of Lord Durham is, perhaps, one of the best: the colouring is deep and vivid, and the expression full of manliness. His own portrait is the least fortunate of any of his later works; moreover, it is unfinished. So much was his likeness in request, that at one and the same time the King, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Francis Leveson Gower, and the city of Bristol, were candidates for the first from the easel. It was purchased after his death by the Earl of Chesterfield, at the ransom of 470 guineas.

Lawrence also found leisure to paint several children; but if he excelled Reynolds in his female fascinations, he was far from equalling him in that innocent glee and unaffected loveliness of look, which belong to boys and girls. The first President of the Academy, a childless man himself, outstripped all competition in these happy images of youth; the last President, a childless man it is true, and a bachelor, was such a devoted worshipper of female beauty, that a touch diviner still was expected from his hand—but in vain. He could paint them, indeed, in connection with maternal fondness—the child in the portrait of Lady Gower is a sweet creation—but then how much of the charm is owing to the presence of the mother? his single figures of children are comparative failures. The son of Lord Durham is a magnificent piece of colour; but there is a total absence of all simplicity. He has seated the boy on a rock, his legs and arms extended for the purpose of covering space, and his look fixed above, with all the upturned intensity of a Newton. "The little Red Riding Hood" comes nearer to the simplicity of nature, and the arch innocence of youth; and the "Children of Mr. Calmady" are certainly sweet and elegant. But these are rare exceptions at best. Lawrence can hardly ever stand a comparison with the children of Reynolds or Gainsborough.

Though his company was much in request, and he was generally to be found at the well-spread tables of public bodies, or people of rank and fashion, he did not allow the duties which he owed to courtesy or to patronage to interfere either with his professional pursuits, or his labours in the Academy. He did not, indeed, like Reynolds, whom he so ardently admired, venture to deliver a series of discourses on art, for the encouragement and instruction of the students. He, probably, thought that all was said that could well be said. He had made no discoveries in design; he had no mysteries in colour; he could tell them no more than what they knew; and he could not inoculate them with his genius, though he might excite their enthusiasm. Fuseli, too, might have considered discourses similar to those of Reynolds as invading his province of Professor; and, though his pencil could not do anything to disturb the self-satisfaction of the President, it was perfectly certain that his pen and his wit might. Sir Thomas, therefore, prudently limited himself to his annual addresses to the students, and the *éloges* of those members of whom death, during the year, had deprived the Academy. That he thought not amiss of his addresses is evident from his having had some of them printed, and distributed among his friends.[1]

If Lawrence is far from profound in his observations, he is always liberal and indulgent. Of West he speaks in terms of moderation; but he perceives qualities in Sir Joshua which his works bear little evidence of. How the first eminent portrait painter of England was in "imagination all compact" with him of the Sistine, Lawrence must tell us:—"The link that united him to Michael Angelo was the sense of ideal greatness; the noblest of all perceptions. It is this sublimity of thought that marks the first-rate genius: this impelling fancy, which

[1] They are added as an appendix to the first volume of his life. They are full of common-place platitudes and fine phrases, and could have been of very little use to the students to whom they were addressed. In one of them, however, he pays a warm tribute of admiration to the genius of Flaxman, and deplores his loss in the most elegant language.—Ed.

has nowhere its defined form, yet everywhere its image; and, while pursuing excellence too perfect to be attained, creates new beauty that cannot be surpassed! It belongs only to that finer sagacity, which sees the essence of the beautiful or grand, divested of incongruous detail, and whose influence on the works of the great President is equally apparent in the calm, firm 'Defender of the National Rock' (!!!), as in the 'Dying Queen of Virgil,' or the grandeur of the 'Tragic Muse.'" The last paragraph of this high-flown passage alludes to Sir Joshua's "Lord Heathfield," "Queen Dido," and "Mrs. Siddons:" of the latter he goes on to say,—"We may well imagine how gratifying were the contemplation and progress of that divine work; and, allowing much to anticipated fame, we may equally believe that part of the noble purpose was protection of the genius he admired, to affix to passing excellence an imperishable name; extend the justice withheld by the limits of her heart; and in the beauty of that unequalled countenance (fixed in the pale abstraction of some 'lofty vision,' whose 'bodiless creations' are crowding on her view, and leave in suspended action the majestic form,) to verify the testimony of tradition; and, by the mental grandeur that invests her, record, in resistless evidence, the enchantment of her person." These words were meant for the eye of the actress, rather than the ears of unfledged artists, and no one will commend either their propriety or their modesty. "That the works, gentlemen," he continues, "of this illustrious man should have the strongest influence upon you, cannot be a matter of surprise; that the *largest* style of painting that, perhaps, is known, should captivate the scholar as it has charmed the teacher, is the most natural result that could have been produced in minds of sensibility and taste: but let it not mislead them."

Lawrence's letters are numerous; and some which treat of painting are valuable. To one of the most eminent of his brethren,[1] then abroad, he thus wrote, in the close of the year 1827: "You are not, perhaps, the first English

[1] Probably Wilkie.—Ed.

artist who has seen the great works you enumerate; but you are the first on whose opinion I can implicitly rely, and who has been capable of discriminating their styles with such lucid accuracy. I will own to you that *three* of the four Raphaels rather disappointed me; there are parts very fine in the 'Christ bearing the Cross,' but it is not in his high and pure style of composition. We see attitudes in the place of natural action, and either feebleness or exaggeration in the expressions. 'The Pearl' equally disappointed me as it did you. The meeting between 'Mary and Elizabeth' has little that is interesting, either in the design or execution. The simple symmetrical grandeur of the 'Madonna del Pache' has more of the elevated feeling of the master than can be found in all the details of the others; and I confess I envied the French, then its supposed owners, the possession of that work. Should you possibly find time to write again to me from Spain, tell what is the subject of that 'Correggio,' which is placed so high at the Escurial. The original of the 'Bacchanalians,' by Titian, must indeed be a rich and fine work. The effect of the large picture of Charles the Fifth is, then, the same with, or of a lower tone, than the sketch in our friend's collection. I am glad that you admire so much the large work of the apotheosis of that monarch, of which, I know, we have often admired the sketch. Your criticism on the blue sky and draperies is exactly my own impression; and the fault is so opposite to the uniform splendour or deep-toned harmony of Titian, that I have almost believed the tale, that those draperies, and their colour, formed part of the dream which is said to have suggested the picture. All praise and, at least, English gratitude be given to the monks for their tasteful indolence! How delightful must be the contemplation of those fine combinations of the palette in their pure and undisturbed freshness; and how painful (were they not?) must have been the opposite feelings on your first view of the 'Notte,' and the 'San Georgio,' at Dresden! I am ignorant to which of those pictures you give the palm. My impression of Titian's 'Last Supper' was moderated by a large copy of it; the sketch is, I dare say, to the artist's feelings,

the more precious work. From the one picture by Ribiera, at Naples, I have been led to think you would find some grand severe specimens of his power and sentiment in chiaro-scuro, which Carravaggio never had. The picture I speak of was, I think, in the San Martino at Naples. Yes, I fully agree with you in the sympathy of our English people with that of Velasquez; but in all the objects and subjects of his pencil, it is the true philosophy of the art, the selection of essentials, of all which first and last strikes the eye and senses of the spectator. I shall now meet our friends on the 10th, with greater confidence: and if I find symptoms of complaint and dissatisfaction at the incompetency of their President, I shall reinstate myself in their good opinion by the introduction of your letter, and its evidence of your regard."

In the same interesting strain he addresses the same distinguished brother, on the 10th of January, 1828:—"It may be part of the happiness of your present existence to have lost all remembrance of the misery of a London life to those engaged in the daily toil of their profession, and linked by it (with some duties) to the just or fancied claims of its society. I want you to remember some part of this your past life, that you may the sooner forgive me for not immediately acquainting you with the result of my application to the Council of the Royal Academy to become subscribers, on your recommendation, to the series of engravings now in progress from the finest pictures of the Spanish school. I have the pleasure to tell you, that I am now furnished with their authority for requesting you to put down the Royal Academy of England as subscribers to this work.

"How exceedingly interesting must that collection of pictures be, by so great a master, over which neglect has thrown its protecting mantle, and thus fortunately saved them from the havoc of repair! In the latter days of Titian, he appears to have been singularly bold and fearless, dashing his colours on the canvas with little systematic preparation: delighting in novel foreshortened views of the figure, in which (as seen from a low point of sight) he and Fuseli are the highest authorities, and, in some in-

stances, losing sight (as perhaps in the apotheosis of Charles) of that sterner dignity of sense, which accompanies the grandeur of his 'St. Peter Martyr' and the 'Family of the Pesaro.' You find nothing of Mengs, to raise him in your estimation, over what he appears in the ceilings of some of the smaller chambers of the Vatican. The mention of his ephemeral reputation recalls the objects of his adoration and study, the 'San Georgio,' and the 'Notte,' at Dresden. On the whole, which do you consider the higher effort of power? I was going to say the most intellectual, but the phrase has its two applications: the one as expressing the highest effort of the reasoning faculties, and, therefore, strictly intellectual; the other as conveying that effusion—that emanation of genius, which the sacredness of the subject so imperiously demands. But we know the entirely different frame of mind with which the artist prepared himself for each: he came to the latter with the same awe, though not in the tones of sorrow with which Milton invokes the sacred groves when he has to lament his 'Lycidas,' girding up his genius to the task; and it was then he might have answered as the poet to his friend, 'You ask me what I am about—what are my present thoughts? My Diodati, let me whisper it in your ear. I think, so Heaven help me, of immortality—I plume my wings, and meditate a flight.' This immortality, which when the powers that claim it are genuine and *consistent* is equally fame at the present moment, can be gained only by the addition of the original to the powerful and the true."

He rejoiced in the success of the clever and the enthusiastic, and wrote them long letters of counsel and encouragement. The following is addressed to that young artist whom he requested to draw the view of Rome: it is dated the 9th of March, 1829.—"I need not tell you how sincerely I rejoice in your success: hitherto you have 'won your spurs by your own valour,' however much the kindness of friendship may have cheered you in the contest. The painting of your figures last year convinced me of your increasing ability in the study of the human figure; and, unless you attempt the higher dramatic or epic style of

composition, you already walk in perfect safety, and need fear no pit-fall in your path. I am anxious to see the picture you are now sending, of which I heard, last night, a very favourable opinion from Mr. Turner. There is a gentleman here who is desirous of having two small pictures of you, about the size of the 'Boy and Girl,' at your own price and subject. He is not in the circles of fashion, but known to almost all our artists by his liberal patronage and gentlemanly conduct. His name is Vernon. Let me know that you undertake them for him. There are many competitors for your little picture of 'The youthful Italian Lovers;' but having your own authority for considering it to be Mr. Bailey's, I retained it for him. Beautiful as your drawing of the same subject was, I preferred the picture. I am well acquainted with the talents and intelligence of Mr. Havell; if you now go to complete those sketches which were but slightly traced with him, and add to them the colour and effects of nature, your tour with a man of such known taste and knowledge of composition, whether beautiful or grand, will have been all gain, and the benefit lasting. I shall not fail to give your remembrances to Callcott, who will be much gratified with the report of your success. You are fortunate in having still the society of Mr. Eastlake; an advantage that cannot be too highly appreciated."

Another letter to the same artist, dated the 27th of March, 1829, is still more interesting: it is full of good counsel in professional matters, and shows the anxiety of the President for the improvement of the students. "Your drawings will, doubtless, be much admired; but I prefer your picture, which I think very beautiful. You have rendered an incident in nature, which, though it ought always to be hallowed, is yet sometimes unpleasing in itself, and often grossly represented, with a delicacy and affection that make it deeply interesting and pathetic: you have likewise given the essential in such subjects,—beauty. You have taken great pains with your principal figure; and the eyes are as well drawn as the other features of her sweet countenance: but in the two boys, the one on the ass and the other accosting him, the eyes are two dark

blots, and ill-formed. Let this carelessness be soon impossible to you. In that sweet little picture, too, of last year, the boy was not looking quite in the girl's face. Be at the pains often to draw that feature: I can quote high authority for it: I have a sheet of eyes, drawn by Michael Angelo for some young painter, like yourself, whose genius had excited the friendly effort. Try, too, to get something of better character in your skies and distance. Do not be content with insipid fair Roman painting (this between ourselves). Clouds, it is true, are all softness; but we have been too long accustomed to see them touched with the *expression* of the pencil, to be content with their tame and spiritless representation. It is the same with your distances; they are very accurate, of true and sweet hues, but you do not *scumble* enough, nor give that fair zest of pencilling which is so exquisite in the first works of Claude and Turner. One thing is against you, viz. the coarseness of your canvas, which no quantity of colour could well subdue."

Few of his letters go so much into the detail of art; and it is seldom that his correspondence is so free from the frivolous and the complimentary. He very rarely wrote concerning the art of composition or the use of colours. When, however, in 1827, Burnet published his clever "Practical Hints on Colour in Painting," in which he questions the assertion of Reynolds, that the masses of light in a picture should always be of a warm mellow colour, yellow, red, or a yellowish white, and instances proofs to the contrary, both in art and nature, Lawrence thus vindicated, in his own gentle way, the opinion of Sir Joshua. "Agreeing with you in so many points, I still venture to differ from you in your question with Sir Joshua. Infinitely various as nature is, there are still two or three truths that limit her variety, or rather that limit art in the imitation of her. I should instance for one the ascendency of white objects, which can never be departed from with impunity; and again, the union of colour with light. Masterly as the execution of that picture is, I always feel (a never-changing impression on my eye) that the 'Blue Boy of Gainsborough' is a difficulty boldly combated, not

conquered. The light blue drapery of the Virgin in the centre of the Notte is another instance, a check to the harmony of the celestial radiance round it."

During the last ten years of his life, he supplied the Exhibition with many fine works; and with none which could not bear comparison with the best of other academicians. He prided himself much on the portraits which he painted of George IV., and preferred one in his private dress to the others; yet the King was full-bodied, inclining to be corpulent, and, when painted in his tight close-bodied dress, looked ill at ease: his clothes in the picture fit so tight, that they seem to give him pain. Lawrence was a great flatterer. He lavished his summer colours upon autumn and on winter; and gave to declining years the vigour and the life of youth. He painted many heads which he desired not to exhibit, and some, which would have been worthy of any gallery, came hurried from his hands by the impatience of the proprietors: others, again, were forced into the Exhibition merely by the vanity of the subjects. The following portraits were willingly exhibited by the painter:—1. Count Woronzow; 2. Duke of York (again); 3. Duke of Bedford; 4. Earl of Harewood; 5. Archbishop of York; 6. Lord Francis Conyngham; 7. Sir William Knighton; 8. Earl of Clanwilliam; 9. Duke of Devonshire; 10. Sir William Curtis; 11. Lord Bexley; 12. Lord Robert Manners; 13. Lord Francis Leveson Gower; 14. Richard Clarke, Chamberlain of London; 15. Duke of Clarence; 16. Sir Ralph James Woodford, Governor of Trinidad; 17. Archbishop of Armagh; 18. Earl of Hardwicke; 19. John Angerstein, Esq.

Sir Thomas was now nigh sixty years of age; and if a widely diffused fame, honours at home and abroad, and a wide circle of distinguished and accomplished friends, could insure happiness, he ought to have been one of the happiest of mankind. Outwardly he enjoyed the world, and the world enjoyed him. He was the companion of rank and wealth in all public places: he wrote perfumed billets full of studied compliments to ladies, and ladies smiled and spoke of the accomplished Sir Thomas. The King of England, allowed by all to be a fine judge, pronounced

him a high-bred gentleman: the King of France, in addition to other honours, sent him a present of royal porcelain: the Irish Academy elected him an honorary member; and such faith was reposed in his pencil, that some one wished him to paint up or paint down—I forget which—the Catholic claims. To lay the copestone upon all other honour, his native city voted him its freedom, in speeches indicating more a sense of his fame than a knowledge of his art; and what was even as remarkable as this owning of his genius by his native place, the opposition which he formerly complained of in the Royal Academy gradually grew smoother in its mood: gentle and persuasive manners at last prevailed.

There were, however, sore drawbacks upon all this felicity. Flaxman, whom he loved for his gentle manners and fine genius, was gone: so was Fuseli, a name which Lawrence evidently delighted in recalling, and never without giving an instance of his friend's wit, his learning, or his genius. His brothers, too, whom he tenderly loved, were dead; and, a solitary man, he was left to reflect on the stays of which he had been deprived: his pecuniary difficulties were getting more and more perplexing from year to year, and from month to month; and, to crown all, for years before his death he had been internally admonished of gradual decay.

Outwardly he had something of the look of health; his fine frame continued erect, and his finer countenance retained its vivacity; but he began to feel that a little fatigued him; that he could not move without pain; while the utter confusion of his accounts, and the trouble which he had in making his income meet his outlay, pressed sorely on him, and between them occasioned that melancholy drooping of the spirit to which he was latterly liable. He had been deprived, too, of another friend, in whose company he once took much delight, and whose correspondence he eagerly cultivated,—I mean Mrs. Wolfe. This beautiful and accomplished lady, after moving in the London circles, and in the society of Sir Thomas's friends and relatives for some years, retired at last, as I have already mentioned, into a distant part of the country. Her

voice from her solitude reached the artist amid the circles of fashion; it was one of melancholy and foreboding, and was answered by a heart that began to feel the vanity of all human things, that perceived the "sere and yellow leaf" was come, and felt as if the ground on which he stood was beginning to shake. This lady fell ill of a fever, and died in the middle of the year 1829. Lawrence was deeply affected. He laid down his pencil, nor resumed it for nearly a month; nor did he hesitate to account for his sadness of spirit. "I have lost," he said, "a faithful and revered friend; one worthy, from genius, right principle, benevolence, and piety, to be the companion of the best."

He was still, it is said, exposed to the designs of the fair; but I am afraid that few will be inclined to pity him during those open or covert attacks, which it is said some were intrepid enough to make upon him, with the hope of conducting him to the altar. A young lady of beauty and accomplishments confidently requested a matron, one of the earliest and latest friends of the painter, to inquire what he meant by his soft and persuasive speeches; in a word, if he desired to marry her or not. When this was mentioned to Lawrence he made answer, "Why, ay, I admired her once for her beauty and cleverness, and thought of marriage; but I soon discovered that she would not suit me as a wife, and ceased to pay her any attention. She has often pained me by her remonstrances and inquiries since; if women will go such lengths, who will pity them?" A man of mature years can have no excuse for tampering, however lightly, with the affections of any woman. One of his female defenders says he gave no wilful pain—never trifled with feelings to please his own vanity; and that, amidst all his soft looks, speeches, and billets, his views rarely went beyond the indulgence of a sort of romantic civility, is more than probable; but he might have known that ladies, whether lovely or otherwise, are not apt to put figurative constructions on compliments and attentions. He was assailed by ladies in another way: one, lovely and vain, thought so well of her beauty, that she imagined Sir Thomas would rejoice in painting her head gratis. He extolled her per-

son; "But, madam," said he, "I have ceased to paint for fame." Another, who had some skill in art, wrote an Amazonian letter, requesting admission for herself and other gentle students to study at the Academy. "Surely, sir," said she, "it is not for man's intellectual superiority alone that fair science has mounted her lofty throne, and derived all her strength and beauty. Examples of past and present days would leap from their hallowed shrines to plant a glorious wreath upon the brows of woman; and although we boast not the designating beard, the brawny sinew, nor possess minds formed like Artemisia and Semiramis, 'for councils deep and deeds of high emprise,' yet our imaginations are vivid, our tastes capable of the highest refinement, and we only want your fostering care to become all that genius short of your own can aim at." When this letter was read to Fuseli, he exclaimed, "What a termagant! Mary Wolstonecroft is alive again!"

We have said that a change had been observed in the health of Lawrence. There was another change: many of his latter letters breathe of piety, and a respect for God's ordinances; and it is well known that some years before his death his thoughts grew serious; that he loved the conversation of devout men; felt scruples about working on the Sabbath, which, in his earlier days, he had practised without concern; and became almost constant in his attendance at church. Even in his correspondence, indeed, with Mrs. Wolfe, and that early, sentiments of a sober and godly nature occur not unfrequently; and in his discussions with her concerning the merits of Byron and Milman, he uniformly bestows his praise on thoughts that are pious, and actions that are sublime. A man, it is true, may express a sense of what is devout and noble, without being pious himself; but I am warranted in claiming for Sir Thomas something beyond a cold compliance with the external forms of religion: the man of the world became, a little through the admonition of declining health, and more from a spiritual feeling, an example to many in a wide city, where good example is greatly needed. I am not sure that he imagined his

health was on the wane: the body feels what the spirit will not acknowledge; and like a wearied traveller, seeks the softer and shadier side of the road. He drooped at his work; he could not exert himself as had been his wont; and the cause was declining strength, whatever he might think. At the dinner of the Artists' Fund, in 1829, to which he was a liberal contributor, when his health was drunk, and loudly cheered, he was moved more than had been usual to him:—"I am now advanced in life," he said, "and the time of decay is coming: but, come when it will, I hope to have the good sense not to prolong the contest for fame with younger, and, perhaps, abler men. No self-love shall prevent me from retiring, and that cheerfully, to privacy; and I consider I shall do but an act of justice to others as well as mercy to myself."

Towards the close of the autumn of 1829, and more as the winter advanced, he was observed to look pale, to walk feebly, and to be overtaken with drowsiness in company. He complained that his eyes and forehead felt hot in the evenings; and he frequently relieved himself by bathing them in cold water. His sister Anne, whom he loved much, was dangerously ill during this period. He wrote almost every day, assuring her of his regard, and promising to go and see her as soon as his pressing engagements would allow him. He declined several invitations; but was induced to accept one from Sir Robert Peel, because in his house he looked upon himself as at home. Cheerful conversation with the accomplished baronet and his lady soothed his mind, he said, and made him forget that he was ailing. He dined there on Saturday, the 2nd of January, 1830. He had been affected during the preceding night with sharp pains in his stomach. In the course of thirty years, he said, he had not passed such a miserable night. "I sat opposite to him at the table of Sir Robert Peel," said Washington Irving. "He seemed uneasy and restless; his eyes were wandering; he was pale as marble; the stamp of death seemed on him. He told me he felt ill; but he wished to bear himself up in the presence of those whom he so much esteemed as his entertainers. He went away early." He was attended by Dr.

Hall, and recovered so much that, on the Tuesday, he painted nearly an hour on the King's portrait, and even attended a meeting of a committee at the Athenæum Club House, where he gave his opinion on points of business in his usual way, but was observed to have a little difficulty in ascending the stair. Some of his friends remembered this afterwards, but they took no serious thought of it at the time. During the night of Wednesday, the 6th of January, he experienced a violent relapse. Sir Henry Halford added his knowledge to that of Dr. Holland. He was bled; leeches were applied to his right side; he felt greatly relieved, and desired his friend, Miss Croft, who had hastened to attend him, not to be alarmed at the change of his looks. In the morning of the 7th, he took tea and toast: and was once more more considered out of danger by all, save his physicians. He said his breathing was now free; and when his friend Mr. Keightly saw him in the evening, he said, "Read that to me—an article by Campbell the poet on the genius of Flaxman." As Mr. Keightly began to read, the sick man's countenance changed; he put his hand to Miss Croft's, pressed hers in an agitated way, and desired them to leave the room. They had not been gone many minutes when John, his servant, cried imploringly for help. On Keightly running up, he found Lawrence stretching himself out on the floor, having slipped down from his seat. His last words were, "John, my good fellow, this is dying." He expired without a groan, and was buried with many honours in St. Paul's Cathedral, beside his eminent brethren, Reynolds, Barry, and West. The Earl of Aberdeen, Earl Gower, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Dover, Sir George Murray, the Right Honourable J. W. Croker, Mr. Harte Davis, and Earl Clanwilliam, were pall-bearers. The carriages of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs went before the hearse; the whole members of the Royal Academy accompanied it; sixty-four empty coaches of noblemen and gentlemen followed; and the venerable Dr. Hughes read the burial service over the coffin, on the lid of which was inscribed, "Sir Thomas Lawrence, Knt., LL.D., F.R.S., President of the Royal Academy of Arts in London, and Knight of the Royal French Order of the

Legion of Honour, died 7th January, 1830, in the sixty-first year of his age." [1]

Sir Thomas Lawrence was five feet nine inches high, with handsome limbs, a body finely proportioned, and a countenance open and noble. His head was bald, but so finely shaped, that the want of hair was a beauty. There was a winning sweetness in his smile; his voice was gentle and musical; and when he spoke, he moved his hand and head in accordance with the sentiments he uttered. His eyes were large and lustrous, and of such expression, as induced a lady of much taste to say, that their light was never tamed down by the gentler emotions, nor the polished suavities of conversation, into harmony with the mild character of his face; the light seemed to kindle still, and he could not put it out. His heartiest laughter was considered so little ungraceful, that some one said, "his mirth may be set to music:" nor did the troubles and passions of life leave a stronger trace than a faint line or so on the brow. His conversation was easy and fluent; but in large companies he loved rather to be a listener than a speaker. He wished to sink and keep out of sight every claim of his own: he desired to send away all who approached him well satisfied with themselves; and this applies to his portraits as well as to his manners. When at ease with his friends, he spoke with feeling, and even eloquence. He had an uncommonly quick perception of the ridiculous—and a turn for satire, which, it is said, even Fuseli learned to respect. "With his matured judgment," said one of the cleverest of his brethren, "he preserved all the enthusiasm of youth, and retained the habits and docility of a student even in his station of President."

"With all his genius," says an admirable judge, "Lawrence was not a person in whose society I could ever have delighted. As, however, he was the painter who pleased every body in his portraits, so was he the person who pleased everybody in his manners, except those two or three who look rather to the grain than to the varnish."

[1] Turner exhibited a sketch of this scene at the R.A. Exhibition of 1830. He seems to have had a great regard for Sir Thomas Lawrence, opposed as the two men were in character, manner, and art.—ED.

"The character of his conversation," says another shrewd observer, "partook of that of his works: he often dwelt on minute circumstances; but they were handled with grace, and always illustrated the subject he was upon. There was a defensiveness about his manners to the world; a sort of holding back, a fastidious modesty, a too high polish, which equalised his bearing to all, and perhaps wore the air of being somewhat artificial."

Concerning his addresses to the students, and his letters to his friends, much has been said. They have been extolled as works of polished beauty, and abounding with feeling, and gaiety, and grace. The first are brief and laboured, the second are voluminous and negligent; but the labour is not that of fine skill, nor the negligence the brave neglect of genius. On inspection, both letters and discourses will be found to resemble each other thoroughly in one thing—the resolution to please; and in this he generally succeeded, for few can resist the insinuating flattery of a man of genius. If we look at his addresses as the offspring of a spirit kind and benevolent, willing to soothe, and anxious to gratify, they cannot be too much commended: for they are complimentary to the living, and humane to the dead. As the companions of his fame fell around him, he was called upon, as President, to pronounce something like a funeral oration. Nothing was said but what was true; but he took care to speak only that part of the truth that suited his own purpose. He did not characterise, but merely eulogise, West, Flaxman—even Fuseli. I have called his letters negligent; I should have said as specimens of composition, for the sentiment is studied enough. "He seldom," said one of his friends, "answered a letter till some days had elapsed, and then he poured out a whole page of elaborate apologies." He bestowed a gift with the air of a man entreating a favour: he wrote himself down infinitely your debtor in accepting an invitation to dine; and when he penned a three-cornered billet to some fair sitter, he assumed the language of tenderness, often of homage, and did all but sign himself "despairing Thyrsis." I am not, however, sure, that the private letters of any man, at all events of any man who

was not a professed author, are legitimate subjects of criticism.

That Lawrence gambled away his wealth in our London sinks of infamy was for a time strongly asserted—but this story has been completely disproved. To the testimony of friends we may add his own: "I have neither been extravagant nor profligate in the use of money. Neither gaming, horses, curricles, expensive entertainments, nor secret sources of ruin from vulgar licentiousness have swept it from me." A friend of his, who had a spirit of observation as well as abundant opportunity, says, "With honours and wealth flowing in upon him, he was, during the last years of his life, a depressed, a saddened, and a failing man. His talent brightened, indeed, and his honours increased to the last hour; but the wealth, great as it was, was too little to meet the claims he had allowed himself to be involved in, and inadequate to afford his beneficence all his heart desired; and—it is a pain to know—too scanty to extricate him, at times, from an immediate pressure for money.[1] He had many friends, and no real enemies; but it was his misfortune to have no confidential friend, with ability and influence enough to do that for him which incessant occupation deprived him of all courage to attempt."

To say that he carried the gains of his pencil to the gaming-table, and squandered, among the "filth and feculence of the land," the price of works of beauty and talent, was, then, a gross calumny: but it is also true, that, by a species of generosity which may be called extravagance, he laid out much of his fortune on sketches, copies, and tracings, from the old masters—on drawings by the young or the undistinguished—and in presents to all who came with tales of sorrow and distress. I mean not to blame his taste, or arraign his benevolence. Many of those sketches and paintings are of great value, and many of those whom

[1] Lawrence left no fortune behind him for his relatives, though many of them had been greatly dependent upon him during his life. After his death, however, a loan collection of his works was exhibited at the British Institution, by which the sum of £3,000 was realized. This was presented by the Directors to his nieces.

he relieved by his bounty were worthy of his sympathy; but his eyes should have been opened wider on the sadness of his own condition, and he ought to have dedicated the fruits of his genius to the equally charitable task of rescuing himself from the punctual creditor and the ravenous money-lender. He had not the power to say nay, either for his purse or his pencil. A lady who had been liberal in her invectives against him, requested him to make some change in the portrait of her mother after her death. A friend, on reading the request, said, "Why should you waste your time on her; she who heaps many a scandal on you with witty and persevering malice?" He replied, with a smile, "Oh, never mind; I know she does as you say: but nobody else can do what she wants, and I must do it for her;" and he did.

Of his methods of work, and his hours of study, something should be said. His journey and residence abroad led him to the practice of a purer and chaster style than his earlier works show: some original defects were exchanged for qualities that told more with the world; yet, among the efforts of his youth there is, sometimes, an inspired boldness, which promised more than his succeeding labours realised. He said, that had not Reynolds been opposed by Romney, whose success diminished his practice with the fashionable world, he would have painted few of his fine fancy pictures. The friend, to whom he made the remark, replied,—"And should a rival worthy of Lawrence arise, we might yet have works of genius from his hand worthy of his Kemble as Hamlet or Rollo, and his group of the 'Baring family.'" He smiled, and said nothing. Of all the great colourists, he preferred, he said, those who *pronounced* their white in a positive manner; and he reckoned it a degeneracy in some of the Flemings, and Vandyck among them, that they reduced the pure white to a sort of grey. "The Venetians," he observed, "made white tell distinct from all other tints; a perfect white." This he himself acted upon in his very latest productions: in his earlier paintings he used white of a warm cream colour.

In describing the impressions which the works of

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Raphael and Michael Angelo made on him, he said that, with all the perfections which the former possessed, there was a profoundness of thought and expression in the other that demanded deeper attention. "Had I been six times to see Raphael, I must have gone seven times to see Michael Angelo." Before he went abroad, he used to say, "Why should I go to Italy to study; have we not Reynolds here?" He also averred that Sir Joshua excelled all other masters save Rembrandt, the most powerful imitator of the effect of nature that art had ever produced. He loved, and he excelled in painting, fine mouths and dark eyes; and he took particular pleasure in painting an ear, the intricate and elegant drawing of which he said required mastery to imitate. "He appeared in painting," said a friend who knew much of his ways, "with the alacrity of one engaged in what to him was truly delightful. But he had two 'attentions.' If he enjoined a friend to read whilst he painted, that which he gave to the reader seemed his whole attention. I never knew him break in upon the reading for his own work, but often lay down the pencil to laugh or weep over the book. Yet there came, perhaps, a moment in which his intense gaze at, and study of, his subject, possessed him wholly; the next he dashed up to the canvas, and the effect was gone. To do what he once understood, seemed the mere play of his hand; and only mechanically and rapidly making that out which his mind had previously settled. That manner of doing always exactly what he appeared to intend, rendered the progress of his picture a very interesting and instructive sight." He was capable of great exertion. On being asked for how many hours he had ever painted without ceasing, he said, thirty-seven; and that was on the portrait of Lord Thurlow. He began at seven in the morning, painted all day and all night, and all next day till eleven in the following night; "by this time," said he, "I could not distinguish one colour from another; remember, too, I was standing or walking all the while, for I never paint sitting."

He could see at a great distance, and also quite close; the first aided him in catching the general expression, and

the other in communicating those finer touches, those almost half invisible lines, to his finished drawings and paintings, which go in the gross to make up the excellence of the likeness. "That fineness of feeling," said one of his most gifted friends, "which made him so sensible to the slights and caresses of the world, probably gave him in his art a delicacy of thought and of touch scarce ever surpassed: making him alike sensible to the utmost refinements of nature in his own labours, as well as powerfully alive to any deficiency in them in the works of others. This, however, which made so much of the charm of his art, with which he could seize, and give an interest to the scarcely visible irregularities of beauty, and touch the feathers, or the silver tissue, with a lightness which seemed to suspend them in the air itself, was in him, as it always must be with genius, accompanied by a strength where strength was wanted, which gave to all that was fine and delicate its true value. When once asked what he was doing, he said, 'All uncertainty—taking refuge in difficulties.'"

As a portrait-painter, his merits are of a high order. He has been called the second Reynolds; not from being an imitator of the *style* of that great master, but from possessing very largely the same singular power of expressing sentiment and feeling, and of giving beauty and often dignity to his productions. He resembled him less in breadth and vigour than in the freedom and elegance of his attitudes, in his skilful personation of human thought, and in the exquisite grace and loveliness with which he inspired all that he touched. One age of the great men, and the courtly beauties of England, will live to posterity on the canvas of Reynolds. Another will do so on that of Lawrence.

'There is much elegance, nay, vigour, in many of the male heads of Lawrence: and over most of them, and all his ladies, he sheds a natural splendour of colouring, which, like sunshine in dew, is as refreshing as lustrous. The mouths of his men, and the eyes of his women, are made only for eloquence and love. Of all his three hundred and odd exhibited portraits, there is, perhaps, not

one that can be called common-place, either in character or in handling. Of these, forty are in the royal gallery, and some fourteen in the collection of Sir Robert Peel.[1] The taste of the times suited his talent; the courtesy of his manners, and the politeness of his pencil, alike aided in his ascent. To him the present was everything, and the past nothing; he had no visions of loveliness past and gone; he saw but living life; his genius was for the court, the elegance of fashion, and the bloom of the hour. Almost every thing that he did shewed his leaning to the soft, the graceful, and the effeminate.

His plan of working was, in my estimation, erroneous; he put in the heads of his portraits at once, but often left them floating in the midst of a blank canvas, until it was difficult for him to recall the exact effect he had originally meant to give to the whole figure. The painter ought surely to bring out the whole man together. It has been said that he trusted inferior hands with filling up his back-grounds, and even the bodies, in many pictures; but I have ascertained that this was very far from being his custom, and that he himself finished all the pieces on which his fame depends, with most laborious and honest patience, to the minutest touch of a drapery.

Many think it it is to be regretted that a continued influx of sitters filled up all the time of Lawrence, after he had acquired unrivalled skill in the mechanical portion of his art. He then, we are told, longed for leisure to give to the world a series of works of a higher order than mere portraiture, and yet partaking of its nature,—I mean, something half real, and half poetic; like what he has given us a fine specimen of in his 'Kemble' as Hamlet. I am not prepared, however, to say, that I think

[1] These portraits did not pass with the rest of the Peel collection to the National Gallery. There are, however, nine pictures by Lawrence in the National collection, including several of his finest works, as, for instance, the portrait of Angerstein, painted for George IV., and presented by William IV. to the Gallery; the much-admired portrait of John Philip Kemble, as Hamlet; and that of John Fawcett, of Covent Garden Theatre. The Waterloo Gallery at Windsor is too well known to need comment. It is there that Lawrence's art is seen in its fullest sway.

his fame would have been lastingly served by an accumulation of pieces of this kind. At all events, twenty of them would hardly have atoned for the loss of one really great man's portrait from the hand of Lawrence.

Sir Thomas himself sometimes imagined that his genius fitted him for excelling in historical composition. He said that he withdrew reluctantly from it, lest it should end with him as it had done with many, in misery and disappointment. England looked, he averred, with coldness, and even aversion, on all such works; and he considered that the taste of the age was an effectual bar to all epic glory. Of his fitness for historic productions let his sketches speak. His studies, as those ruder designs are called, which usher in the finished performances, are all of a very different order. They were fac-similes of heads which he was commissioned to paint, or figures in academic postures, such as students draw; but there are no indications of a spirit aspiring to higher things: neither the court, the camp, the historian's page, nor the poet's song, had inspired him.[1]

[1] Sir Thomas Lawrence's life was written by D. E. Williams, in 1831, and was published, with his correspondence, in two octavo volumes. It is written in somewhat the same stilted and complimentary style that Lawrence himself delighted in, and is consequently rather wearisome to modern readers. Cunningham's account, on the other hand, written in an easy unaffected manner, is one that we have no difficulty in reading. It contains almost all that is important to be known about this fascinating "face-painter," as Fuseli delighted to call him, and gives a very faithful estimate of his worth as a man and an artist. Of course, to paint a face truly is one of the greatest achievements of art, but probably what shrewd old Fuseli really meant was, that Lawrence was content with the face of things, and never saw beyond into their inner nature. Thus his portraits, clever as many of them are, never rise, like Sir Joshua's and all truly great portraits, into historical works. They tell us nothing of the thoughts and feelings of the persons represented, but only how they looked under certain conditions, and in the eyes of a painter who tried to please everyone by insidious flattery. Opie made a very pungent remark about this: "Lawrence," he said, "made coxcombs of his sitters, and his sitters made a coxcomb of Lawrence." Lawrence's portraits, as contrasted with Sir Joshua's, have a meretricious appearance that reveals something of the character of the painters as well as of their art. Good, simple old Sir Joshua, though he did not write languishing verses, was a genuine poet, and he could not help seeing even his most commonplace sitters in a sort of ideal light. He

flattered them, it is true, by representing them in this light, but he did not omit any truth about character that their faces might tell. His portraits are always individual and historical, while almost all those by Lawrence have the self-same languishing affected expression, and his women especially seem to be saying, "Look at me! am I not beautiful and innocent, and fashionable!" Lawrence, in truth, was just as much of an idealist as Sir Joshua, only his ideal was of a different type. He worshipped fashion and beauty as they were displayed at the Court of the First Gentleman in Europe, who was what Taine calls "Le personnage régnant" of his day, that is to say, the model on which fashionable society formed itself. Sir Thomas Lawrence was *his* painter. I do not know that a greater misfortune could have befallen him. "The artist," says Schiller, "is, it is true, the son of his age, but woe for him if he is its pupil, or even its favourite." Never was an artist a greater favourite than Lawrence, or a more docile pupil. Spoilt from his very babyhood by the admiration his beauty and precocious talent excited, he never took the trouble to work in sober earnest at learning to paint. Endowed with rare skill in drawing, he relied too much on this for the effect of his pictures, and early adopted a facile mode of colouring, which, though pure and beautiful in its tones, has a cold and somewhat unsubstantial look compared with the rich glow of Reynolds, or even Romney's coarser work.—Ed.

JACKSON.

DURING the earlier days of art in Britain, a painter was required to be cunning in other crafts: he was, as the records of Henry III. tell us, carpenter, mason, glazier, house-painter, gilder, emblazoner, embroiderer, upholsterer, and tailor. We have no artist now, perhaps, who unites all or any of those professions with his own: yet, collecting its members mainly from the humbler ranks of life, art has had amongst its followers men of fame and name who were bred to other pursuits: Inigo Jones, if we may credit the sarcastic Ben Jonson, was originally a carpenter; Sir Christopher Wren had been an astronomer and mathematician; Hogarth, a silver-chaser; Banks, a worker in earthenware; Romney, a cabinet maker; Bird, an ornamenter of tea-trays; and the painter, of whose life and works I am now about to write, was for some time a tailor.

John Jackson was born the 31st of May, 1778, at Lastingham, a little village in the North Riding of Yorkshire. His father, the tailor of the place, desirous of ensuring bread for his son, apprenticed him at an early age to his own business. I have heard that the boy had an internal dislike to the trade, and worked at it with no good will:[1] he had, probably, no settled notion of what pursuit was most suitable; a country bred boy can see but little to select from. His aversion to the needle and shears arose wholly from his love of painting, which came upon him whilst at school, and grew and gathered strength, as he related, from visits which he made to the pictures in the galleries of Lord Mulgrave and Castle-Howard.

His first attempts were portraits of his school companions: these were made chiefly with the pencil, and of

[1] He was, however, a good tailor, it is said, in spite of his dislike to the trade; and this made his father desirous of keeping him to it.—Ed.

a small size: but though rough and rude, as all such things must be, they were not without a certain freedom and vigour of outline; and it is said that discerning persons saw in them the tokens of a spirit original and unborrowed. Cheered by such praise, and animated by an inward consciousness of talent, he sought to make nearer approaches than black lead could suffice for to the pictures which he admired. One of his neighbours, a house-painter, supplied him with such colours as he imagined necessary; and, after many a secret and unseen effort, he produced a portrait, in which he imitated, not unhappily, the light and shade of a picture by Reynolds. This was shown to the village schoolmaster, who happened to have some taste in art; he liked it so well that he took it to Lord Mulgrave, who, pleased with the attempt, wished to see more sketches: these he liked still better, and sending for the young artist, was so pleased with his modest simplicity of manner, that he promised to keep him in mind.

These were not words of course or of courtesy: Lord Mulgrave took the surest way to prove the genius of young Jackson and advance his fortune. On his return to London, he showed the sketches, in pencil and in oil, to Sir George Beaumont, by whom they were pronounced to be no common things; and words of encouragement, and painting materials of the right kind, were now liberally supplied. Though Jackson still continued at his trade, he gave up all his mind, as well as the little leisure he had, to the study of painting: he read dissertations and criticisms on pictures; he compared the living nature before him with that of the works in the collections of his patrons; and, with a fresh eye and increase of knowledge, renewed his labours in lead and in oil. Of the offspring of those days of youthful hope and toil, I can give little or no account. The poet burns his early verses when the muse supplies better; and the artist destroys frequently the first gropings of his fancy, when knowledge helps him to something more graceful or lofty. Among the chaos of his works, at his too early death, was found one head painted in the colours which his friend the house-painter supplied; and men of taste were not wanting who perceived even in it the

dawn of that deep and daring mode of colouring in which he afterwards excelled. It was, perhaps, on works of a more decided character than this that Sir George Beaumont founded his judgment, when he united with the Mulgrave family in purchasing up two years of Jackson's unexpired apprenticeship. The attempts with the black-lead pencil which brought him first into public notice were of those days; and, while he was yet young, he was considered as one of the most skilful drawers of likenesses amongst living artists.

The first use which Jackson made of his freedom was to put himself on the road to London. On his arrival he presented himself to Sir George Beaumont, saying that a few portraits which he had drawn, in little, for the Mulgrave family and others, had put some money in his pocket, and that he wished to study in the schools of the Royal Academy, where he would have good advice and approved models. "You have done wisely," said Sir George; "London is the place for talents such as yours: but you must lay down a regular plan of study; you must copy the best pictures during the day, and avail yourself of the advantages of the Royal Academy during the evening. You have done much for yourself; but you have much to learn from others. To enable you to do all this you shall have fifty pounds a year while you are a student, and live in my house; you will soon require no aid." [1]

If there are few young men equal in merit to Jackson, it must be confessed that patrons such as Sir George Beaumont are still more rare. In the house of his distinguished friend, as any one who has read our sketch of his life in this volume will guess, he met almost all the men of the age remarkable for taste or genius. Jackson could not fail to profit by such company; the defects of his education were here made up almost without exertion:

[1] It was, I believe, Lord Mulgrave, and not Sir George Beaumont, who bestowed this pension on Jackson; at least Haydon says so in his journal, and it would seem most likely, for Jackson always spoke of Lord Mulgrave as his "patron," and his Yorkshire extraction naturally made Lord Mulgrave take an interest in him. He might possibly have lived at Sir George Beaumont's house in town for a short time.—Ed.

his natural good taste was improved; and he retained little of his original condition but a certain modest simplicity of manner which was his own by inheritance. His works, too, began to emerge from rudeness and inequality into correctness and beauty: the value of science, and acquaintance with the best models, soon became visible: but though he seemed daily, nay, hourly, to be on the ascent in all that he did with the lead pencil, his progress in oils was slow, and for some time not very promising. He loved the wildness of Fuseli, and the correctness of West; but he studied Reynolds, and dreamed of him. The splendour of Sir Joshua's colouring, and the harmony of his light and shade, took his fancy most; and he hoped, by labour and care, to unite these high qualities with his own talent for pencilling in a likeness. It was during those days of struggling labour in oils that he tried his hand in water colours; and it must be confessed that here his success was so great, that he might have been pardoned had he sought no higher fame. In this department he soon excelled all living artists; but he was aware that reputations founded on fleeting materials are comparatively unimportant, and he resolved to master the mystery in oil colour, and earn his station amongst the chief painters of his time.

To accomplish this cost Jackson some seven years of toil; and when he had pleased himself, he found that the difficult point of pleasing others was still unattained. The excellence of his drawings and his portraits in water colours was acknowledged; but for some time his pieces in oil were reckoned unworthy of being hung lower than the highest line of pictures in the Royal Academy exhibition, where a work only goes for so much coloured surface to hide the naked walls. His style of colouring was at first harsh, and deficient in harmony; it was startling, too, by its boldness; and his masses of light and shade served, for a time, to make the experienced stare. There were other obstacles. Hoppner, Beechey, Owen, Opie, Phillips, and Lawrence, had all been adopted by fame before him; and though some of these were too soon removed by death, the eminence of those that remained was so high that he

could hope for nothing but what he conquered by dint of skill and genius. For many years the smooth elegance of Lawrence won all admiration away from what was considered the ruder and less cultivated style of Jackson. His first exhibited picture was the portrait of Master H. Robinson; this was in 1804, and the artist lived then in Hackley Street;[1] in 1806, he exhibited the portrait of Lady Mulgrave and the Honourable Mrs. Phipps; his residence was then at 32, Haymarket: while he lived there he exhibited the likeness of the Honourable H. C. Phipps, of Lady Mary Fitzgerald, and the gallant Marquis of Huntley, now Duke of Gordon. In 1809 he removed to 54, Great Marlborough Street; and it is to this period that a very sensible writer in the "Library of the Fine Arts" alludes when he says, "Although Jackson had not established his reputation as a painter in oil, his portraits in water colours were universally admired: and his practice in this department was extensive, and productive of a very handsome income. In these the heads were tastefully drawn, the resemblances were faithfully correct, and, although carefully finished, wrought with masterly spirit. The style, indeed, was so deservedly popular, that his practice was greater, perhaps, than that of any contemporary portrait painter in small. Many of the heads engraved in Cadell's splendid work, 'Portraits of Illustrious Persons in the Eighteenth Century,' were from drawings by Jackson."

[1] He entered as student at the Royal Academy in 1805, in the same year as Wilkie, and a year after Haydon. This trio of students soon became fast friends, and many are the pleasant freaks recorded of them in Haydon's and Wilkie's journals. Jackson, who seems to have been a very good-natured fellow, and entirely free from the jealousy that marred all Haydon's proceedings, was the first who perceived Wilkie's genius. "There is a raw tall pale queer Scotchman come," he wrote to Haydon, who was away when Wilkie first made his appearance at the Academy schools; "an odd fellow, but there is something in him;" and afterwards, when Wilkie had painted the "*Village Politicians*," he was so delighted with it that he insisted on taking both his friends—Lord Mulgrave and Sir George Beaumont—to Wilkie's lodgings to see it. They were at once charmed with it, and Sir George Beaumont gave Wilkie a commission, and the foundation of his success was laid. See "Life of Wilkie."—Ed.

From the year 1809 till the year 1816, when he was thought worthy of being elected an Associate in the Royal Academy, his fame as a painter in oils continued gradually on the rise. As the harmony of his light and shade increased, and the manner in which he disposed his masses of colour became more regular or better understood, his portraits gradually descended lower and lower on the walls of the Royal Academy, and finally took their station with those of the most approved masters. During this period he exhibited in all some two-and-thirty portraits; and of these no less than seven were heads of members of the Royal Academy. It will not be deemed a drawback on his prudence, if we relate that all these were painted during the two years which preceded his admission as associate: he knew that compliments, such as his pencil could now pay, might not be without their influence in helping him to his object. He had now removed to Newman Street: the care of maintaining a family had come upon him: he was aware of the value which the world attaches to distinctions which should ever be the reward of merit, and naturally felt solicitous to obtain what he could not but feel was his due. In 1817, his patience and his prudence were rewarded, and he was elected a member of the Royal Academy.[1]

After all, during the twenty years which elapsed between the day on which he took his seat at the table of Sir George Beaumont, and the year 1817, when he was elected Academician, if we may judge by the list of his exhibited works, Jackson had made but little progress in captivating the nobility of the land by the force of his delineations and the vigour of his colouring. Only fourteen titled heads are named in the Academy catalogue—and it is to the honour of his earliest patrons that most of these belong to the family of Mulgrave. I was told, on enquiring about Jackson, in 1813, that he was rather clever in seizing a likeness, but was too unskilful or impatient to finish well what he hopefully began; and that his reputation was

[1] In this same year also he gained a premium of £200 from the directors of the British Institution, as a testimony to the general excellence of his pictures.—Ed.

sustained chiefly by the influence of the Phippses and the Beaumonts.

The few who happened to dislike Lawrence were willing to detect a serious rival to his reputation in Jackson; and as early as the year of his election there were not wanting judges who took courage to assert that, in character and strength of colour, he was superior to Sir Thomas.[1] Jackson himself smiled at these flatteries, yet they were not without their influence: he loved to be told of the slow snail-like diligence of the other, and of his ten sittings of three hours each; and he silently contrasted such labour with his own miraculous alacrity of hand, which enabled him to dash off a portrait in six sittings of an hour each, and yet omit nothing which a finished performance required. This almost unequalled facility of hand was natural to the man, and did not arise from anything like indifference to fame; in truth, the pictures which he painted the quickest were painted best. He felt that glow of fancy which Sir Walter Scott is said to have felt when he was delineating scenes most akin to his fancy: to stop, and study, and consider, was fatal to that flowing or undulating continuity of thought and expression, which is as necessary in a picture as in a story. He was not one of those artists who form their subject by slow and repeated touches; he dashed off his work rapidly, as some of the painters of old are reported to have done. I never saw him at work but once. One of his brethren had obtained an order to paint a portrait of George III. for a corporation hall, and had worked all in except *the head*—there he had paused,—he was skilful in other things, but felt perplexed at portrait. In this moment of distress Jackson made his appearance; the palette and brushes were offered to his hand; he took them without saying a word, as he was wont when he did acts of kindness, and in an hour and a half dashed in an admirable likeness from memory, aided by one of Chantrey's busts,—it seemed the growth of enchantment.

[1] Leslie was one who thought so. He says of Jackson, that "for subdued richness of colour," a quality in which he particularly excelled, "Lawrence never approached him."—Ed.

A day in the life of such a regular person as Jackson is the emblem of a year, and one year represents a score. When it is told that a beautiful lady sat for her portrait, was ill to please with respect to posture, was a little whimsical in the matter of colour, and had her own peculiar notions of the cut of her dress, but that the painter, by soft words, and sailing with the current, triumphed over all difficulties, and produced both a good likeness and a fine work of art, the history of a hundred portraits of ladies is related. Nor is the story of the sittings of the sterner sex more interesting or various: the genius or the rank of the sitters may give an importance to the labours of the painter; but the weariness of monotony cannot fail to belong to continued descriptions of similar light and shade, similar sentiment, and not very dissimilar postures The business, therefore, of a mere portrait painter, though agreeable to himself from the ease with which his work is done, and the pleasant company which it brings, affords few materials for biography or criticism. No doubt artists see, or imagine they see, a difference in the expression, the drawing, or the handling of each new head which comes from the easel; but the world at large is not so sharp sighted. We must not imagine, however, that, though the labours of a portrait painter require less thought than those of a painter of history, all he has to do is to make a mere copy of the head before him: to produce a likeness is the least difficult part of the task; were that all, study would be rendered easy, and academies might scatter their collections and dismiss their professors. A mere likeness is no more to be compared to a true portrait, than a chapter of the "Newgate Calendar" to the "Heart of Mid Lothian."

As Reynolds had profited even in portrait painting from his Italian studies, Jackson, perhaps, hoped the like result, when he set out for Rome, in company with Chantrey, in the summer of 1819. He had before visited Holland and Flanders with General Phipps, and that journey, hasty though it was, had, it is said, some effect in giving greater breadth and freedom to his style. In the magic of colour he had now little to acquire; and in the rapidity of execution he was without a rival. It was, however, chiefly to

colour and to execution that he still directed his attention. Nevertheless he allowed little to escape him: his taste took in the landscape of nature as well as the creations of art; and he copied much that was lovely or remarkable in the land through which he journeyed. Few memorials, save those of the pencil, remain of this tour. The painter was a companion so pleasant and pliant, that he was as clay in the hands of the sculptor. "He was easy and accommodating," said Chantrey, "to a fault. During our journey to Rome, I never saw his temper ruffled for a moment: whatever we did he approved of it; and whether we went to the right or to the left it was all the same to Jackson." He was much struck with the splendid ruins of Rome, and seemed occasionally to think that the architecture, both ancient and modern, rivalled the painting and the sculpture.

Though he did little for some time but wander astonished through the streets and the galleries, he settled down to study at last. The first of his Roman works was that noble portrait of Canova, which he painted for the Canova of England. When the Roman artists heard that a new painter had made his appearance among them, they went to see how he handled his subject; and there was some spreading of hands and shrugging of shoulders among them when they saw the rude rough way in which the stranger at first dashed in the likeness; they all went away, prophesying utter failure: and even Canova himself, accustomed to see heads elaborated out by academic rules, was, for a while, inclined to think he was squandering his time in sitting to Jackson. At the fifth or sixth sitting, however, he exerted all the magic of his hand, and bestowed such brilliant depth of colour, and such truth and force of expression, that the great sculptor broke out into loud expressions of astonishment, greatly to the amusement as well as delight of Chantrey, whose confidence in his friend's powers had prepared him for this result. The wonder of the Roman brethren was still more strongly excited, when, on the fourth day before he left Rome, he set up his easel opposite the celebrated Titian of the Borghese palace, and began to copy it. "On the evening," said

Chantrey, "of the fourth day of his labours he produced one of the most extraordinary imitations in pencilling, and in tone, that I ever saw. The astonishment of the Roman and German students amused me much: some of them had been toiling for months at copying the same picture, and had not succeeded; and when they saw that a four days' work not only surpassed all their attempts, but fairly rivalled the great original, they knew not what to think or say." Jackson was unequalled for his fac-simile imitations; he copied, in a couple of days, the "Three Maries" in the collection at Castle Howard. He was fond of showing his skill in such things: his head of Reynolds, in the possession of Chantrey, might pass, with good judges, for the original by Sir Joshua; and his copy of one of the portraits of Rubens, painted in the presence of the students of our Royal Academy, was regarded as perfect in all the chief excellences of the Flemish master. The students left their easels when Jackson began his work, and "stood marvelling at his superior perceptions; they not only felt, but expressed their admiration at the intelligence and skill which governed his pencil, and enabled him with this enviable facility to master his subject.

These achievements in the Roman capital were rewarded by his admission into the Academy of St. Luke. On his return through Florence he copied a couple of pictures in the Florentine Gallery,—his fame had flown before him, and the students were prepared to applaud. "In Venice," says Chantrey, "my friend spent most of his time contemplating the works of Titian and Tintoretto, in whose works the finest colour is combined with the finest composition; the latter painter rose much in our esteem. In this country we know but too little of his merits: he is high in all things where he ought to be high. Jackson, though a silent man, was eloquent here; indeed, on all subjects of a professional kind, he showed good judgment, and often surprised me by his remarks on works beyond the ordinary line of his studies." After an absence of several months he returned to London. His portrait of Canova was exhibited during the following year; his fame wanted but a work of the surpassing excellence of this to

rise to an equality with the highest. "I consider his 'Canova,'" said Chantrey, whose judgment in such matters cannot be questioned, "as one of the finest specimens of true character and true colour in modern portraiture." Along with this he exhibited a group containing portraits of the Earl of Mulgrave, General Phipps, the Honourable Augustus Phipps, and Sir George Beaumont.

From the time of his becoming a member of the Royal Academy till his visit to Rome, Jackson exhibited in all twenty portraits; one of the most remarkable of which was the likeness of himself now in the collection of Lord Dover. He is represented with the palette in his left hand, in the attitude of study: he appears to contemplate a picture, and so just and vivid is the expression, that one would imagine him about to lift his brush to the object of his examination. There is a visible connection between his mind and hand. I reckon this one of the best imagined of all his works. Another was the portrait of Earl Grosvenor, now Marquis of Westminster: it is an express image of care and prudence. Jackson had no complimentary way of gaining favour; he never endowed ordinary heads with high faculties; the sordid he left sordid, and to the wise he gave their wisdom. He had gradually changed his system of colour: at first he worked with black and white on a brown ground, laying the colours thin, and varnishing the whole so as to form that clear grey which Reynolds loved. One of his earliest portraits in this way was that of Miss Stephens the actress, whom he drew with a song in her hand, and, as the critics of those days said, with harmony on her lips.[1] He gradually employed a deeper and deeper body of colour with less varnish; but in whatever way he painted he never failed to show the same singular readiness of hand and the same sense of breadth and harmony. "The late Lord Carlisle," said Chantrey, "bought Jackson's portrait of Northcote, and placed it in the next room to that which contains the head of Snyders, by Vandyke; and our

[1] This picture is now in the National Gallery, having formed part of the Vernon collection.—Ed.

countryman's reputation for fine colouring loses nothing by the comparison."[1] Northcote was something of a favourite with Jackson; mild and placid himself, he yet liked to sit and listen to the sarcastic and cynical remarks of the other.

These, and other works of the like excellence, had their effect on the public mind, and Jackson began to experience something of the sorrow which continual labour of the same kind brings. To paint the faces of the community at large from nine in the morning till five at night could not be otherwise than monotonous; and I have heard him say that he occasionally found it difficult to dismiss one sitter from his thoughts whilst he was limning another. As his fame extended, friends increased in number; not friends only, who order their portraits, sit impatiently till they are painted, carry them wondering home, pay for them, and never think of the artist more,—I mean kind and permanent friends. One of the most steadfast of these appears to have been Lord Dover, for whom he executed not less than nine or ten pieces. Amongst these, besides his own portrait, the best were the likenesses of Lady Dover and Flaxman. The first is well known to all lovers of art for its beauty of drawing and the unrivalled splendour of its colours; the very feathers of the hat seem in motion, and the face over which they wave appears full of thought—the lips are about to speak: nor is there wanting a singular grace of manner and delicacy of touch in keeping with the natural loveliness of the countenance. I remember how many triumphant fingers were held to this work in the exhibition. An artist came up to me and said, "We have found a rival for Lawrence in female beauty, at last." A fine engraving of this admirable portrait carried the name of Jackson through France and Germany; it was exhibited in the year 1823; and few modern pictures of any class have had more celebrity.

[1] Sir Thomas Lawrence also, speaking at the Royal Academy dinner of Jackson's portrait of Flaxman, said of it that "it was a great achievement of the English school, and a picture of which Vandyck might have felt proud to own himself the author."—Ed.

Another of the chief triumphs of his genius is the portrait of Flaxman; it is not a better likeness, nor yet better painted than that of Canova—but the head of the English sculptor was naturally more imaginative and sublime than that of the Italian: there is a sort of sombre grandeur about it which awes one. "At the Academy dinner in, I think, 1824," says Lord Dover, "I sat exactly opposite to Flaxman, and was so much struck by the intelligence of his eye, the placid benignity of his countenance, and his altogether venerable head, that I became anxious to have those characteristics worthily represented in painting. In going down stairs I found myself next to Jackson, and said to him, 'I never was more struck in my life than with the countenance of Flaxman—you must paint him for me.' His success in this was so great, that I desired him to paint the head of Chantrey as a companion, which was not quite completed when he died." It was to the injury of his fame that he painted so few of those men whose genius insures their being thought of hereafter, nor did he seem anxious in the matter; he executed orders as they came, and squandered his splendid colours on all who chose to pay him fifty guineas. He never entertained the idea of forming a private gallery for himself of the born heirs to fame in the island; he did not see that by this he would have doubled his chance of a hereafter; for the world at large loves not portraits for their colour and their expression alone; they make a difference between the head of one dead and forgotten, and of one dead and yet living.

He was not, however, sparing of his colours among his brethren of the Royal Academy: of its members he painted, in the year 1814, Bone, Stothard, Ward, and West, the president. In 1815 he did the same for Westmacott, Thomson, and Shee; and, in 1816, he made the portrait of Nollekens. If we add to these the drawings of Northcote, in 1818, it will bring us down to Jackson's admission into the Academy as a member. I have no wish to impute his election to the persuasion of these nine portraits, for his merits were such as to render his admission a matter of right; nevertheless they no doubt added a little to the in-

fluence of his genius: and it is a fact that he was more frugal of his time regarding the heads of his brethren afterwards. Of the remainder of the forty, he painted Dance, in 1819; Flaxman, in 1826; Soane, and Chantrey, in 1830; the three latter were commissions. Of the merits of these thirteen portraits it is not necessary to speak at any length. Northcote, Stothard, Flaxman, Soane, and Chantrey are the best. The first is querulous and cynical; the second, mild and contemplative; the third, imaginative; the fourth, age-worn and full of anxious thought; the fifth, in an attitude of study, less natural than it should be, yet striking and impressive, from vigour and luxury of colour. To these I may add his own portrait already described, and, perhaps, the best imagined of them all, which makes him the painter of fourteen members of the Royal Academy. It was to these, perhaps, as well as to others, that Chantrey alluded, when he said, "Much has been written and spoken about Lawrence's delicacy of colour and refinement of character in his heads, and very justly; but in many instances Jackson has surpassed him in the former quality, though seldom if ever in the latter."

He exhibited, in all, one hundred and forty-five pictures, between the years 1804 and 1830;—of these, twelve, or more, were the portraits of ladies of rank and beauty: viz. 1. Lady Mulgrave; 2. Lady Mary Fitzgerald; 3. Lady Georgiana Morpeth; 4. Hon. Miss Lascelles; 5. Lady Georgiana Herbert; 6. Lady Caroline Macdonald; 7. Lady Harriet Paget; 8. Lady Mary Howard; 9. Lady Anne Vernon; 10. Countess of Sheffield; 11. Lady Catherine Phipps. Some of these are works exquisite both for natural grace and beauty of colour. Reynolds and Lawrence made, as far as naming them went, some of their lady-sitters into divinities, and caused the heroines of the courts of the two last Georges to carry about the names of Juno, Iris, Minerva, Circe, and Venus. No such fancy ever entered the head of Jackson: to be a handsome woman he thought honour sufficient; as such he saw his fairest sitters, and as such he painted them. He was, in truth, no flatterer; he took no pains to eke out the deficiencies of nature either in shape or colour. He had not the presumption to think of

making out the head as nature should have made it. This sort of simplicity, together with the influence of the fascinating pencil of Lawrence, kept many, I fear, of the fairest dames of the day from Jackson's studio.

With the sterner part of the creation he was in more request. He painted the portraits of some twenty men of rank, including one prince of the blood. I shall write down the most of their names, to show by whom the genius of the painter was supported, in times when strong rivals were in the field: 1. Marquis of Huntley (now Duke of Gordon); 2. Marquis of Hartington (now Duke of Devonshire); 3. Lord Mulgrave; 4. Archbishop of York; 5. Lord Normanby (now Earl Mulgrave); 6. Marquis (now Duke) of Buckingham; 7. Lord Grosvenor; 8. Viscount Lascelles; 9. Earl Grey; 10. Lord Grenville; 11. Lord Braybrooke; 12. Lord Dundas; 13. Bishop of Winchester; 14. Hon. Edmund Phipps; 15. Hon. James Abercrombie; 16. Lord Villiers; 17. Earl of Sheffield; 18. Marquis of Chandos; 19. Duke of Wellington. To these may be added some dozen or so of private gentlemen and men of science. These were all more or less distinguished by the singular ease of hand, harmony of colour, and truth and vigour of effect. The Duke of Wellington is a whole-length; and the idea of the painter was to stamp something of the sternness of his field-of-battle look upon him; the colour is too grey, and, though the look is concentrated and piercing, it is not one of the happiest of the painter's efforts. The genius of Jackson was strictly imitative, not creative; he indulged in no fancies; he gave us no little domestic groupings, such as Reynolds excelled in; nor did he venture on heads half real and half poetic, like Opie, Owen, and Romney. He took up his palette without any emotion of pleasure or of pain, and laid it down unconscious that he had done anything remarkable.

The friends of Jackson, during the last two years of his life, observed with concern his fading looks and his decreasing cheerfulness; but no symptoms of weakness, though sometimes of haste, were to be seen in his works. He continued to paint with his usual diligence; but fits of dejection came upon him, though he had no cause to com-

plain of fortune: he grew absent of mind, and sometimes gloomy; and though in earlier years not averse to jovial society, he now became less social; imagined he had got a sight of the evil of his ways; frequented prayer meetings; and even went the length of officiating as precentor to a congregation of obscure sectarians.[1] All this, or much of it, could only be attributed to decaying health and strength. He was happy in domestic matters. His first wife, the daughter of a respectable jeweller, in London, was dead, and had left one child, a daughter, to his care.[2] His second wife, a daughter of Ward, the painter, loved to set his household in order, and maintain his station in society. His painting rooms were in Newman Street, but his residence was in St. John's Wood, and there he entertained his friends; and, when the hour of labour came, he was conveyed to his studio in a chariot of his own. His income was reckoned high; and when one of his friends talked to him of saving part for old age, he answered, that he thought he might save eight hundred a year; this, however, he only contemplated; for such was his want of economy, that he consumed all his winnings, and felt, at last, the decay of body and the sinking of spirit which announce the grave without having made any provision for his wife and children.[3] His earnings are said to have sometimes amounted to fifteen hundred a year; but I have heard it surmised that he often painted at a lower price than the

[1] Scarcely "obscure." He belonged to the Wesleyan sect, and his connection with this influential body of dissenters brought him many commissions. He was not like Sir Thomas Lawrence, a painter of court and fashion, but he has left us a great number of portraits of noteworthy and worthy men. For many years he executed the monthly portrait that appeared in the "Evangelical Magazine," the organ of the Wesleyan body, and even some among these portraits are of men who made a mark upon their generation. Unhappily, like Cowper, he fell into a desponding state of mind in later life, which was increased no doubt by the doctrines in which he believed.—Ed.

[2] His first wife, who appears to have been named Fletcher, died in 1817, in her thirty-seventh year, according to an entry in the "Gentleman's Magazine."—Ed.

[3] The Royal Academy bestowed a pension on his widow, who was left with three children without any resources. She lived until 1873, when she died at Finchley, aged seventy-five.—Ed.

one named on his tablets, viz. fifty guineas per portrait: so that, in fact, he might appear to be making fifteen hundred a year when he was not realizing more than a thousand.

The death of Lawrence seemed, to the world, to remove the only obstacle between Jackson and an increasing fame, and a boundless fortune. I have, however, seen some of his own letters on the subject, and in them there is neither hope expressed nor much sorrow intimated. The day for the election of a new president approached, and the bosoms of not a few of our portrait painters were in a flutter. That Jackson dreamed of the vacant chair I cannot assert; friends were not wanting who advised him to try; he at least demurred upon the matter, for so I interpreted his meaning when he thus wrote to one of his well-wishers: —"I assure you, my dear sir, that the opinion expressed in your note respecting a future president has proved as gratifying to me on one hand as humiliating on the other; for we shall not soon see that office discharged with the ability and integrity which we have witnessed for the last ten years. Many thanks for the expression of your good wishes towards me. I believe no interest without the walls of the Institution would be available, and perhaps less within, where each one is a party immediately concerned, and all consider themselves equally eligible." Jackson probably was aware of his want of smooth and persuasive words to lull the storms which the more turbulent of his brethren might raise; and he may also have felt that his deficiency of education rendered him unfit for a place where scholarship is looked for, though not always found. The hopes and fears of many, both lower and higher than Jackson, were set at rest when, on the day of election, Shee was raised to the chair of Reynolds and Lawrence.

But though much public favour usually accompanies the president, Jackson had no cause to fear that his income would suffer from the preference which his brethren had shown in the choice of Shee. His skill of hand and knowledge of colours were still his own, and he was generally considered as second only, and that but in some

matters, to Lawrence himself. The world of taste expected to see Jackson assert his superiority; and many heard, with disappointment and regret, that he was obliged to seek health in the country. But the health which meadows, and glades, and river banks, often give to the thankless and the undeserving was denied to the painter; he visited his native place, and cast his eye, for a last time, on the village where he lived when a child; saw a present which he made, of a copy of "Christ in the Garden," to his parish church, placed in a suitable light, and set out for London, to the bosom of his family. He had taken an inside seat; but one of those overbearing gentlemen whom the meek and the careless are sometimes doomed to meet with interposed, and Jackson, without cloak or proper covering, was driven to the top of the coach to encounter a storm of wind and rain. Cold and drenched, he reached his own house; and a long and severe illness, which brought him nigh the grave, was the consequence of this unfortunate journey. He had in some degree recovered from this when Lord Mulgrave died, and Jackson, feeble and ill as he was, considered it his duty to follow the remains of his benefactor to the grave. On his way he felt himself worse, and, amid the mourners, was remarked as one for whom the grave was gaping. He reached his own house with difficulty, sickened, and, in spite of all human skill, died in June, 1831, in the fifty-third year of his age.

In person Jackson was above the middle height, well made, though slim, and of a mild and pleasing look. He was silent in mixed company, but his silence had nothing surly in it; with a friend or two he was companionable, lively, and entertaining. Though some questions were rather rudely agitated during his day in the Academy, he mingled not in such bickerings, but maintained his ordinary tone and temper. This was not from education but from nature; he was born so, and it cost him no effort to practise it. "I never saw him so happy," said Lord Dover, "as when contemplating the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and he never lost an opportunity of purchasing his pictures, when, at a sale, the price came within his reach. In settling the prices of his own pictures, he was

moderate even to generosity. The only difficulty I ever found with him was in persuading him to let me pay for such works as he painted for me: he used to say, 'We will talk of that another time.' His knowledge and judgment of old pictures were considerable, and I bought several of those in my rooms by his advice. He had imbibed the purest taste in art from Sir George Beaumont, the best judge of pictures I ever remember. In private he could not be but beloved for his singleness of heart and his simplicity and truth of mind; in all the relations, too, of domestic life, he was exemplary, which is not surprising, when we reflect that his actions were regulated by a fervent sense of religion."

As a painter, his chief merits were truth of character and force of colour. In most of his portraits, however, he appears to have limited his views to an accurate image of the person; he is vigorous as far as flesh and blood give vigour, but neglects too much to inspire his heads with sentiment, or bestow upon them a visible capacity for thought; and it cannot be denied that he often has something of vulgarity about his vigour. He had uncommon readiness of hand—a rapid felicity in finishing: his colouring is deep and clear. Some continue to speak of him as the ablest of the express followers of Reynolds:[1] I should rather say, judging him by his best works, such as will keep their fame hereafter, that, in expression, Jackson occupies a place between the elegant detail of Lawrence and the manly generalities of Raeburn. In freedom and vigorous breadth of colour he more than approaches the first President of the Academy.

[1] Messrs. Redgrave class him thus, and speak of his art in high terms of praise. It is curious, indeed, that he has not taken a higher position in British art, for his pictures have many of the requisites of greatness, though somehow they just fall short of being great. It is cleverness we find in them rather than genius. They would seem to have suffered somewhat at the present day from his having used fugitive colours. It was his custom, I believe, to paint each portrait first of all in black and white, and then to tint it up to the colour of life. The effect at the time was excellent, but now, in many cases, the black shows through the colour that covered it.—ED.

LIVERSEEGE.

OF this painter a short account was written for "The Athenæum" by Miss Jewsbury, now Mrs. Fletcher; and another by another hand appears in the "Library of the Fine Arts." As both writers were acquainted with the artist, and show much taste and feeling, I have availed myself of their labours, adding all the original information I could obtain, and such remarks as seemed necessary.

Henry Liverseege was born at Manchester in the year 1803. The fine arts flourish most where wealth and knowledge abound: they are less heeded in places where men have to procure subsistence before they sacrifice to elegance. That Manchester, lately a village, but now a town with two members of parliament, encouraged as well as produced Liverseege, must be taken as a proof of increasing wealth and growing taste. At first the fortunes of the painter were dark enough. He was born weak and deformed; and when he began to gain strength, the painful discovery was made that his father disliked him, and treated him harshly. Of this cruel parent, it is said, "he could never speak without feelings of deep emotion; oftentimes with tears, at the manner he had been treated by him—his cruelty and his neglect." Poverty has been assigned as the cause of this unnatural conduct: his father held a subordinate situation in a cotton manufactory, and supported himself with difficulty: but poverty has usually proved a kind and compassionate nurse, with whom weakness of body excites a warmer sympathy and a deeper love. We must set it down to deficiency of feeling. That he looked upon his helpless child with aversion has not been denied, and must be recorded to the dishonour of human nature. The place of the father was supplied by the uncle.

a person generous and kind, who brought the boy up, and watched over him with care, and even fondness. He was afflicted with an asthma from his cradle; and, besides being weak, he was not a little peevish. His temper, however, improved with his health, and all allowed him to be quick in comprehension and desirous of knowledge.

The schoolmaster taught him to write, but he taught himself to draw. It was remarked, that a love of drawing grew upon him: he began soon to sketch heads and groups; he did this, he said, because he saw others do it: yet it was observed that he was solicitous to excel, and was never satisfied unless his attempts surpassed those of his companions. He was allowed to remain longer at school than usual, because of his weakness of body; but, when strong enough to be put to business, it was found that a love of painting had not only taken possession of his fancy, but that his uncle was resolved to indulge his inclinations. When he heard this he smiled, and it was observed from that day forward he was more cheerful, and that he looked to his benefactor with a reverential fondness which time only served to strengthen and confirm.

Of the early studies of Liverseege little has been told us; nor is it, perhaps, important; for they were portraits, and chiefly remarkable only for that sort of staring Saracen-head style of likeness which common spirits deal in. Portraits, however, brought him employment and bread, and made him known in his native county. They taught him, too, to combat with difficulties of form and expression, and prepared him for success in that dramatic style of painting by which he will be known to posterity. That he had talent suitable for what Barry contemptuously calls the art of "face painting," is more probable than that he had that nice tact and patient courtesy which the variable moods of querulous sitters require. He was quick-tempered and impetuous; a reader of looks and an interpreter of signs; ready to take offence, and equally ready to be appeased. This touchy sensibility was not in the way of his dramatic compositions, but it was otherwise than welcome to that large portion of the community who think they confer a favour by sitting for their likenesses, and who look for sub-

mission and obedience at the hand of a painter. It would not be agreeable to one so sensitive as Liverseege to be obliged to bow his own judgment in form and colour to the dictum of those who had not made art their study. Tired, and perhaps disgusted, he forsook the field of portraiture for the wide realm of imagination.

His success in works of fancy was in the commencement otherwise than cheering. In the year 1827 he painted three small pictures representing banditti, and sent them to the Manchester exhibition. They were disposed of with difficulty, and at a small price. He was not, however, disheartened; he had found out where his strength lay; he had a strong perception of the pictorial qualities of poetry and romance; he loved, like Hogarth before him, to look on living life, and had some of that eminent artist's feeling for what was ludicrous and striking. The first work which stamped him as an original genius, was his picture of "Adam Woodcock," from Scott's "Abbot," which was admired and purchased by Lord Wilton. This acknowledgment of his merit was the signal for the approbation of many who hesitated before. The painter began to be inquired after, and his studio visited, by persons willing to praise, if not to purchase. His next work was the interview between "Isabella and the Recluse,"[1] in the "Black Dwarf," in which he perhaps performed as much as art could do with a subject unsuitable for the pencil. That deformed and mis-shapen lump of humanity can barely be endured in the narrative. The addition of shape and lineament fills up the measure of our dislike. The fame which the artist acquired induced strangers who visited Manchester to make inquiries concerning him. They were told that he still lived with his generous uncle and aunt; was well to do in the world; that London booksellers were attracted by his reputation: and that he no longer painted signs for alehouses or portraits at five guineas a piece.

He came to London to draw in the British Museum, and

[1] This was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1830; but before this, in 1828, he had exhibited there a picture of "Wildrake presenting Col. Everard's Challenge to Charles II."—ED.

study at the British Institution; and was soon distinguished among the students for his quickness and skill in drawing; more especially for his fine copies of the works of Rubens, Vandyke, and Teniers. He was aware of his own merit in this way, and sometimes declared he could make a copy so like in sentiment and hue, that no one could say which was the original. He attended occasionally an academy, now discontinued, in Savoy Street, Strand, and availed himself of the permission which Lawrence gave to all young artists of respectability to look at his collection of paintings. During one of those visits, Sir Thomas made his appearance, spoke to Liverseege with much kindness, inquired how painting prospered in Manchester, and at parting said if he desired to become a probationer in the Royal Academy he would have much pleasure in giving him an introductory letter to the Council. I know not how soon after this the young artist, desirous of being admitted to draw at the Royal Academy, applied for admission, and sent at the same time a specimen of his skill in art: he had, however, neglected to obtain testimonials to his personal character; and, as the Royal Academy are judges of morals as well as of drawings, this informality subjected him to what he considered the indignity of a refusal: he was deeply offended, and never applied again.

On his return to Manchester he renewed his labours in the dramatic department of painting, and with increased success. He sought his subjects chiefly in books—sometimes in nature. Of the latter kind is one called "The Inquiry," representing a simple country lad, with a present of game in his hand, inquiring his way of a pompous and supercilious porter standing at the door of his master's house. There seems nothing more aimed at than a delineation of a real scene: the swollen turkey-cock air of the one, and the timid, awe-struck simplicity of the other, are happily hit off. Of a similar character, in point of literal delineation from life, is "The Cobbler reading 'Cobbett's Register.'" You see at once that the son of Crispin is spelling his way, though he is putting on a look of pondering sagacity. It is a happy little picture. The "Recruit"

is another of those natural and striking things. This is a wonderful performance. Within that range of subjects nothing has been produced which surpasses it. The expressive attitude and general air of the perplexed recruit; the free and devil-may-care bearing of the soldier, are admirably and truly depicted, and no less so the anxious attitude and imploring look of the female. He has introduced an incident which adds considerably to the interest of the work: in the background is represented an old woman watching beside an old infirm soldier, whose shattered body and wooden leg tell the story of his life. The painting is clear and light, and the handling beautifully free. These three pictures are all the offspring of the painter's own observation or fancy, and bear upon them the marks of a mind which studied the workings of the human heart.

Liverseege seems to have forgiven the Royal Academy for refusing to open their doors to him as a student; for in 1831 he sent two pictures to the Exhibition: "Sir Piercie Shafton and Mysie Happer," from Scott's "Monastery;" and "Hamlet and his Mother in the Closet," from Shakespeare. The latter is a noble work; the spirit of the King of Denmark seems really of the other world, and has all the feeling and poetry, without the extravagance, of Fuseli. Mysie Happer is a clever creation, and nearly realizes the miller's maiden of Scott: her lover is less to our liking; his legs are a little too long, but he has much of the affected and put-on airs of the original. For this fine picture the Duke of Devonshire gave fifty guineas. They were well received by the world, and the name of Liverseege began to be heard of among coteries and connoisseurs. At the same time he had several paintings in the Exhibition of the Society of British Artists, of merit equal or superior to those in the Royal Academy. These were, "The Grave-diggers," from "Hamlet;" "Catherine Seyton," from the "Abbot," and "The Benedicite, or Holy Daughter," from the painter's fancy. The latter was painted in London, and admitted to the gallery after the Exhibition opened. The grave-diggers are too literal transcripts of life to satisfy us as personations of those of

the great dramatist: the heads, too, are curious and odd. There is, however, no exaggeration; indeed, the artist never erred in that way; he was a great master of propriety, as well as skilful in the matter of colours. "Catherine Seyton" is, it seems, a likeness of the painter's sister. The figure is easy and graceful; and "The Benedicite" represents a veiled lady kneeling at the altar receiving the blessing of a priest. There is a touching reverence of manner about the devotee, which gained the attention of many good judges; while those who were admirers of fine colour spoke in high terms of the opposition which her white dress and veil formed to the sable robe of the monk. It was purchased by Heath for his annual "The Keepsake." [1]

While Liverseege was thus making his works known in the metropolis, he forgot not his native place. In the exhibition of the Manchester Institution of August, 1831, he had four pictures: 1. Don Quixote in his Study. 2. Cobbett's Register. 3. The Fisherman. 4. Don Quixote. Of one of these, "Cobbett's Register," I have already spoken. "'The Fisherman,'" says a clever writer, "he painted during his stay in London last summer, and picked up the model at the bottom of Arundel Street, Strand. He composed the whole into a picturesque and exquisite painting, exhibiting 'The Fisherman' in a doubting mood, whether he should take another pot or no. The scene is laid outside the door of a public house. On a table is the pot turned upside down, the fisherman standing beside it, his hands in his pockets, a pipe in his mouth, and the sea in the distance." Love of drink promises to be victorious. The "Don Quixote in his Study" was painted in London: he intended to have sent it to Liverpool for the fifty-guinea prize at the Institution, but was prevailed upon to exhibit it in his native place. The grave dignity and touched loftiness of soul of the inimitable hero of Cervantes are finely embodied. "It will be found, perhaps," says one of his biographers, "the best painting he has ever done, as displaying a fine eye for

[1] For the sum, it is said, of forty guineas. "Catherine Seyton" was also engraved.—Ed.

colour and knowledge of chiaro-scuro and breadth. The picture is very broad, clear, rich, and harmonious; and the contrast of Don Quixote's pink gown against the green curtain of the library affords a delightful effect. The Don is represented with a countenance noble and dignified, but wasted and careworn: on a table beside him lies a great book in which he is reading, with an iron helmet and a globe, and some other books. The light strikes down from the left upon the table and book, and the yellow table-cover assists to diffuse it. The only extreme decided colour is his black velvet cap, relieved by a gold tassel. It was hinted to him that a little blue somewhere would improve it. 'Oh, by no means,' he said; 'it would then be too fiery.' Every object and particular colour in this truly admirable work is painted from the model; and, indeed, he never worked upon any design without having the objects before him disposed in the exact order as he wished to represent them. This is the reason why his works possess that vivid air of identity and individuality which cannot be obtained by any other means." Fame was now of the painter's household, and money poured in. "The Recruit" was sold for one hundred and thirty guineas, and his sketches brought large prices. It was observed that his health improved when success dawned; he became more pleasant, too, in company, and more cheerful in public. To his uncle and aunt he was ever the same; gratitude was, with him, a fixed principle of soul.

From the year 1826, when he resolved to release himself from the thraldom of portraiture, to the close of the year 1831, Liverseege sketched or painted all those pictures through which his name claims a place among the distinguished artists of his country. His fancy teemed with designs, and his mind continually brooded over large undertakings. We may say that, till the twenty-fourth year of his age, he was as a man wandering in the dark, without any visible aim or mark to satisfy his ambition: he was waging a continual war with fortune, and groping his way to distinction by the aid of a wandering rather than a fixed light. With the first outburst of success the cloud was lifted from him at once; he asserted, by a

succession of fine works, teeming with character and beauty, his claim to be ranked with the rising. Nor did he come forward as the disciple of a particular school; his academy was the field and the cottage, the poem and the romance. It is much to be lamented that he left many fine works incomplete. Of these, "Salvator Rosa among the Banditti" was partly finished in oil. The great painter appears in captivity; his portfolios of designs are scattered about; a single brigand guards him, while the others sleep in picturesque groups around. There is much of "savage Rosa's" own light and darkness and dash about the work. He exchanged a sketch in oil of "Edie Ochiltree" with his friend David Roberts for an exquisite architectural drawing: he did the same with several other artists: a sketch of "Slender and Anne Page" he gave to an intimate friend. He was not only a lover of art, but a zealous admirer of all the eminent artists of his day.

He remained in London during the year 1831, till summer was far advanced: he had several meetings with the Duke of Devonshire, who interested himself in his fortunes, and requested to have other works from his hand. He had received some attentions from Etty; he returned this civility by calling on him twice: he ventured a third visit without having been favoured with a call, a condescension not common to him. He found the academician at his easel: he spoke but did not move or cease to paint; upon which Liverseege said, "I fear I am interrupting you, sir, so good morning." Surprised at this, Etty laid down his palette, requested his visitor to stay, and said, "You do not at all interrupt me." All would not do: he continued going; and, when at the door, said, "This is my third visit to your one, Mr. Etty," and away he went. "However, shortly after," says a friend, "his spirit was appeased by the academician calling upon him." He always had a scolding ready for those acquaintances who neglected visiting him for two days at least. He was subject to very sudden fits of illness, and was attacked several times when last in London; and when any one neglected calling on him, he would, at first, be very angry; but he would soon grow cheerful, and used to

wind up his rebuke by exclaiming, "Sir, you would leave one to get ill, and die and be buried before coming to see them." He was not one of those artists who feel damped and dismayed in the presence of paintings of the highest excellence. One day he paused before Wilkie's "Village Festival," and, pointing out to a friend the high merits of the work, said, "I would stake my reputation on the production of a picture of similar character; and if any one would commission me to do it, I would rest my name on it alone, and care not if I never painted more." He had such knowledge of human nature, such skill in delineating the manners and businesses of humble life, and such mastery over his materials, that there is no doubt he would have produced a work well worthy of being admired.

Liverseege, during the last six months of the year 1831, was observed, at times, to be melancholy and drooping: these dark fits were followed by sudden gleams of joy and gladness, when he discoursed of art with much enthusiasm and knowledge. He loved the company of his brethren in art, and proposed, when in London, to set apart one day in the week for meeting them, in a room to be fitted up with old-fashioned furniture, carved oak work, curious armour, and ancient weapons. He had an edition of Shakespeare in one large volume, which he called his work-day bible, and always reckoned himself well in health when he could enjoy it without weariness. He was conscious of the weakness of his body; he avoided all ungentle exercises, took great care of himself, and loved to hear his friends quote the old proverb, "A rickety hinge holds longest together." He was continually on the look-out for singular heads and curious characters to suit him for models in designs which he had made. He began a painting of "Christopher Sly and the Landlady," from Shakespeare, but was long before he could find such a cobbler as he desired. At length he found a man he imagined would suit; and, having placed him in his studio, set down a bottle of strong gin beside him, saying, "Drink whenever you please." The liquor vanished in a short time, the spirit of the cobbler refused to stir, he sat as

sober as a judge on the circuit; another bottle of gin was brought; it went the same way in course of time, and the son of Crispin sat steady as ever. "Begone!" cried the painter in a passion, "it will cost me more money to make you drunk than the picture will fetch."

After his return to Manchester little was heard of Liverseege for some months; it seems that fits of more than his usual sadness came upon him, and, though he did not consider himself worse than usual, he was observed to be restless and irritable more than was his wont. Of death he loved to speak. "I care not," he said, "for what is called dying, for I have no enjoyment in life save what is derived from success in my pursuits; yet I should not like to die until I had done some great work to immortalize my name—to be remembered after death is, indeed, a great consolation." Though ailing and complaining during the winter, he continued to paint with his usual enthusiasm. He had sketched a picture of Falstaff, and expected from it an increase of reputation; for he looked upon it as superior to all his other efforts. Shakespeare lay beside the easel, and Cervantes and Scott were there too; for he admired them, and called them his "friends." He began to alter in his looks about the middle of winter, seemed to consider that "death was with him dealing," and said so to some who sought to cheer him. He was not seriously unwell for more than two or three days, and never so ill as to be unable to sit up and converse: he had desired at night that Shakespeare might be laid on his breakfast table; and no one felt alarmed till he was seized suddenly, and expired, on the morning of the 13th of January, 1832.

Liverseege was five feet five inches high, thin and spare, slightly deformed in the left shoulder, and of a pale complexion; his looks were inquiring and suspicious; his eyes had a glance of unceasing anxiety, and his mouth expressed nervous irritability. Much of this arose from long illness; for his natural disposition was open and generous, his sentiments elevated, and his manners courteous and winning. He had a strong consciousness of genius upon him, and often alluded to it; but he never rendered it offensive. He admired the talents of others, and loved to

speak of the merits of the chief leaders of the English school: his idols were Reynolds and Lawrence; but he preferred, it seems, the latter, because his minute marking assimilated more to his own style. In his dress and appearance he was neat and gentlemanly, and though he was not a little vain, his vanity was not at all of the kind to give offence.

As an artist, the excellence of Liverseege lies in dramatic representation of human life and the delineation of character. He had a fine eye, a clear head, and a cunning hand. He loved to paint scenes where visible life and imagination meet; nor can it be determined whether he excelled most in seriousness or humour: his wild caverns, filled with wild banditti, may be compared with his Cobbler reading Cobbett; and his Grave-diggers may be placed by the side of his Hamlet or Don Quixote. Some of his heads are, perhaps, too singular for the subject; and we frequently find ourselves wondering over these breathing oddities, when we should be arrested by the sentiment of the picture. He has been compared to Bonington. I see little resemblance. In dramatic character Liverseege is much superior.[1] We think of the groups of the latter as individuals with distinct characters; of the individuals of the former as of groups in a landscape. His style seems his own, his manner of handling is masterly, and his colouring deep, rich, and harmonious. His imagination was not apparently of a high order; he had little of that almost divine faculty of shaping his pictures in air, and commanding the splendid visions to abide till he invested them with form and colour. Hence his continual anxiety for models, not of body so much as of look and sentiment:[2] he poured

[1] It is to be regretted that this young painter, of whom all critics combine to speak highly, is not represented in our national collections, and is therefore but little known. Most of his works are, I believe, in private hands in Manchester.—Ed.

[2] He often, it is said, modelled his figures in clay before painting them. For a picture he painted of "Hudibras in the Stocks with Ralpho," not mentioned by Cunningham, he had stocks made, it is recorded, purposely to fit the two figures; and the stocks having but four holes, and Hudibras taking up more room than his man, and leaving but one hole, he hit upon the expedient of placing one foot of Ralpho in the

out his gin with the hope of obtaining a tipsy representative for Shakespeare's Sly. A friend sat to him for the "Knight of the Woful Countenance," though any one familiar with the Don of Cervantes cannot but feel that the character is one essentially poetic, and that the looks must correspond. He found a model, one who required no stuffing, for his Sir John Falstaff. It is not Sir John's corpulence, but his wit, which the poet presses upon us:—

"A fair round belly with good capon lined"

is easily hit off; but who can hope to be a model for the humour which made the prince laugh "till his face was like a wet cloak ill folded up?"

intermediate hole, between the legs of his master, thus adding much to the humorous character of the scene. This was about his first picture in a dramatic style.—Ed.

BURNET.

ART has its early victims as well as poetry. Chatterton and Kirke White gave no greater promise of excellence in verse than did Bonington and Liverseege in painting. To these names we may add that of James Burnet, a young landscape painter of no common powers. He was born at Musselburgh in the year 1788, and was the fourth son of George Burnet, general surveyor of excise in Scotland, a man of probity and talent, and Anne Cruikshank his wife, sister to the eminent anatomist, the friend and associate of John Hunter. Others of his house have attained distinction: his brother John Burnet is as widely known for his talents in original composition with the pencil as for his almost matchless skill with the graver. The family came originally from Aberdeen.

The instruction which Burnet received at school during the day was excellently followed up in the evening by that of his mother, a devout and prudent woman. There are few of his countrymen who derive not as much of their knowledge from their father's fireside as from the public schools. His mind took an early turn towards art: during his leisure hours he loved to walk into the studio of Scott, the landscape engraver, with whom his brother John was a pupil:[1] nor was he long in lifting the pencil; the result of his attempts was, that he was put under the care of Liddel to learn wood carving, at that time a profession both lucrative and popular. This branch of art, indeed, is now nearly extinct; a love of what is plain has come upon the country, and carved chairs, couches, and cabinets are ex-

[1] This was Robert Scott, an engraver of some note in Edinburgh in his day, and the father of David Scott and our present artist W. B. Scott. Several distinguished engravers were educated in Robert Scott's workshop.—ED.

pelled from parlour and drawing-room; our cornices and architraves are no longer ornamented, and festoons and flowers flourish no more on our walls.[1]

During his apprenticeship Burnet studied at the Trustees' Academy, under Graham, where he was noticed for the natural truth of his delineations. As his skill of hand increased, he began to perceive the limited nature of the art of carving in wood. He sent some of his compositions to his brother John, who had removed to London; expressed a wish to follow and devote his time to painting; and without waiting for a letter of encouragement, which was on the way, he left Edinburgh, and arrived in London in the year 1810, in the twenty-second year of his age. He found his brother busied on his fine engraving of Wilkie's inimitable "Blind Fiddler." He stood and looked earnestly and long on the picture; he had seen nothing so full of character, or so finished in all its details, during his studies in the North. A new light, he said, broke upon him, and from that moment he resolved to alter his style of drawing. In this resolution he was confirmed by examining the works of the best Dutch masters in the British Gallery. In them he perceived much of what he admired in Wilkie: he lost no time in making attempts in what ought to be called the natural, rather than the Dutch style. "So convinced was he," said one who knew him intimately, "of the little progress he had made in colouring, and the other essentials which are everything in the department of the art he had chosen, that he may be said to have only then commenced his studies; so little applicable is an academical education to the humbler and picturesque walks of art."

In Wilkie and the Dutch masters he perceived something entirely after his own heart: he loved the vivid human character in the former; and of the latter, Potter and Cuyp became his favourites. He desired to unite their qualities; and while he studied their mode of handling their subjects, and endeavoured to look upon nature with

[1] This, it must be remembered, was written fifty years ago. No one certainly would accuse the taste of the present day of "a love of what is plain."—Ed.

their eyes, he was perfectly aware that nothing short of originality of conception would lead him to distinction. He had sought what he wanted in the academy, but found it not; he therefore determined, like Gainsborough, to make nature his academy; and with a sketch-book and pencil he might be seen wandering about the fields around London, noting down scenes which caught his fancy, and peopling them with men pursuing their avocations, and with cattle of all colours, and in all positions. Of these sketches I have seen a vast number: some are rude and ill arranged; others display bits of great beauty and character: the greater number are such as he probably intended to paint pictures from; for the scenes are generally well depicted, and the sentiment plainly expressed. Of cattle he seems to have been particularly fond, and has represented them in all possible postures, and of all hues—"The ring-straked, the speckled, and the spotted." He also seems to have been a judge. Some of our cattle painters, imagining that the more flesh cows have the more milk they will give, have plumped them up into a condition for the butcher, but not for the milk-pail. Burnet knew that a moderately lean cow produced most milk, and in this way he drew them. But in all that he did he desired to tell a story. This he knew would give interest to his works, and produce at the same time action, expression, and variety. Nor did he confine his studies to the fields alone: he made himself familiar with the indoor as well as outdoor economy of a farmer's household during seed-time, summer, harvest, and winter; he left no implement of husbandry unsketched, and scarcely any employment of the husbandman without delineation.

The first fruit of all this preparation was his picture of "Cattle going out in the Morning." The e is a dewy freshness in the air; and the cattle, released from their stalls, seem to snuff the richness of the distant pastures, and acknowledge the loveliness of the day. His next picture was superior even to this: in his "Cattle returning Home in a Shower," purchased by Sir Thomas Baring, "he has introduced," says an excellent judge, "everything that could in any way characterize the scene. The rainbow in

the sky, the glittering of the rain upon the leaves; the dripping poultry under the hedge, the reflections of the cattle on the road, and the girl with her gown over her shoulders, all tend with equal force to illustrate his subject." This picture placed him in the first rank as a pastoral painter.[1] Others followed of equal or superior truth and beauty: such as his—1. Key of the Byre; 2. Crossing the Brook; 3. Cowboys and Cattle; 4. Breaking the Ice; 5. Milking; 6. Crossing the Bridge; 7. Inside of a Cow-house; 8. Going to Market; 9. Cattle by a Pool in Summer; 10. Boy with Cows. Some of these are in the collections of the Earl of Coventry, the Earl of Egremont, and the Marquis Camden: others are in the possession of the painter's relatives. A very fine one, "The Boy with the Cows," belongs to James Wadmore, Esq., and hangs worthily with the Wilkies and the Turners, and other masters of the calling.

I have said that he sketched and studied much in the fields. He felt that the excellence which he coveted could not be obtained on more moderate conditions. It was also his practice to write down on the spot his own observations regarding the future handling of the picture in oil: these are both curious and numerous, but their scope and aim are so interwoven with the landscape to which they relate, that few of them will be understood separately. I find the following memoranda regarding distances—"Extreme distance ought generally to be of the same tint as the sky with which it unites; and as it approaches the middle ground, the strata appear interspersed with touches of light and dark, such as the lights upon the tops of houses with their shadows. Be particular in marking the buildings with a firmer line than the trees; never admit colour into your distance when in the direction of the light; scumble a little with purple and grey at the bottom of your objects, losing their forms at the base. In a side light, the objects are coloured where the light shines upon them, while the

[1] He first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1812, two years after he came to London. It would seem to have been this picture, called in the catalogue "Evening: Cattle Returning Home," that he exhibited and was fortunate enough to sell.—Ed.

shadows are all of one tint: even red is grey in the shadow; but when the light is behind you, every object is made out with its proper colour." The same clear, simple method of instruction distinguishes all he says regarding the treatment of that unstable element, water. "To paint water well, it ought, if possible, to be painted at once with a full pencil and a quantity of vehicle: the colours reflected in water appear more pleasing from their possessing a rich pulpy substance, and also from their sweetly melting into each other. In painting water, particular attention should be paid to the place and distance, as it alters much according to the situation. Objects near the foreground raise their reflections strong when they touch aught, but are often lost when they come to the bottom of the picture; while, on the contrary, objects in the distance show their reflections stronger as they approach towards you. This arises from the waves conveying the reflection being larger and less under the influence of perspective than when they touch the distant object."

Burnet is equally plain and explicit on the subject of "sky:" as his remarks are the offspring of his own observations, I shall give the student the advantage which can be derived from them. "The sky being of a receding character, all those points which contribute to give it such character should be the study of the painter. Mere white, for example, will seldom keep its place in a sky, but ought to be used in foreground objects for the purpose of giving a retiring quality to the whites in the sky and distance. Softness of form also aids in giving the sky a retiring character, although it is necesary to give a little sharpness to prevent the sky appearing what is termed woolly; yet very little is sufficient to give firmness to the whole. Clouds are much more opaque in the north than in the south, as the light shines upon them in the one situation and through them in the other. Their form alters much, too, according to the time of day: at noon they are round, and more like those of Wouvermans; in the evening they are more like those of Cuyp or Both, especially about an hour before the sun goes down." Besides remarks origi-

nating in the contemplation of nature, there are, in his school-books, observations on some of the landscapes of our greatest masters. Under the date of May, 1814, I find the following memoranda concerning the pictures of Richard Wilson in the British Institution:—"I observed some pictures more pleasing than others; those which seemed most so were light pictures with warm foregrounds falling into a cool sky and a distance, the middle ground mostly in shadow of a purple grey, with yellow and green touches through it; a piece of blue drapery in the foreground gives great value. Of all things, Wilson seems careful to keep a proper balance of hot and cold colour, and of light and shade, with very little positive colour, and little of black or white, but always some of each."

But whilst this young painter was noting the excellence of Wilson, or watching the shifting colours of the sky and the changing hues of nature, he was sensible that a disease which flatters while it destroys was gradually gaining upon him as ice upon the stream, and robbing him of his vigour, bodily and mental. He still continued his excursions among the fields: the consumption from which he was a sufferer made him feel the beauty more deeply of solitary places: he was to be often found in secluded nooks; and the beautiful churchyard of Lee, in Kent, near which he, in his latter days, resided, was a place where he frequently wandered. But change of air and scene brought no improvement to his health; his looks began to fade; he could scarcely take his customary walk in the fields, or use his notebook and pencil. He is still remembered about Lewisham and Lee as one who was to be found in lonely walks making sketches. His cheerfulness never forsook him: he loved to talk with his friends concerning art; and at times, when he forgot that his days could be but few, he spoke of landscapes which he had planned and resolved to execute. On finding that death was near, he desired his brother John to bury him in the village church of Lee, which forms the background of several of his studies, and resigned himself calmly to his fate. He died on the 27th of July, 1816, aged twenty-eight years. His dying request

could not, it seems, be complied with: parochial étiquette forbade the burial of a stranger, even of genius, in the church of Lee, and he was interred in the churchyard of Lewisham.[1]

James Burnet had a fine eye, and an equally fine feeling, for the beauties of landscape: his knowledge of nature was extensive and minute; he had watched the outgoings and incomings of shepherds and husbandmen, had studied flocks and herds, and, as the memoranda which we have quoted show, had made himself intimate with much that lends lustre to landscape. It was his custom, in country places, to watch the cows going to pasture, or returning home; to look to the manners and practices of the cow-herds; nor did he sometimes hesitate to loiter amongst the cottages, and observe through the lighted up windows the employments or amusements of the peasantry. To such feeling for the rural and picturesque, he added an excellent eye for colour; he could employ at will either the bold deep tones of Rembrandt, or the silvery and luminous tones of Cuyp. To those who know the difficulty of guiding the eye from one extreme to another, this will be deemed great praise. He had considerable poetic feeling: there is nothing coarse or common in his scenes: his trees are finely grouped; his cows are all beautiful; they have the sense to know where the sweetest grass grows; his milkmaids have an air of natural elegance about them, and his cowboys are not without grace.

Of his defects the critics of his day spoke; they called his cows lean, his shadows too dark, and said his sheep with their torn fleeces seemed creatures dying of the rot. Those who are acquainted with country scenes, and with flocks and herds, may smile at some of these remarks.

[1] John Burnet, from whom Cunningham probably gained most of these particulars, was a painter also, although he is better known as an engraver. He had not much power of original invention, as his large picture of "Greenwich Hospital and Naval Heroes," painted for the Duke of Wellington, as a companion to Wilkie's celebrated "Chelsea Pensioners," testifies, but he had considerable skill in rendering humorous scenes. Unlike his talented young brother, he lived to a ripe old age, dying, in 1868, at the age of eighty-four.—Ed.

Under a fat cow a milkmaid will think it nearly labour lost to place her pail; and sheep which graze among briars and thorns cannot fail to show dishevelled fleeces. No doubt he had defects: but what were they compared to the great natural truth and beauty of his delineations?

CONTINUATION OF THE LIVES

OF THE MOST

EMINENT BRITISH PAINTERS.

BY

MRS. CHARLES HEATON.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

It must be stated that several of the following "Lives," although written especially for this work, have appeared already in various reviews and magazines; also that the life of Landseer has been kindly contributed by Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse, author of "Pictures by Sir Edwin Landseer," and "Landseer's Studies."

M. M. H.

THOMAS STOTHARD.

THOMAS STOTHARD holds an isolated position in the history of English art. There is no artist either before or after him with whom he can be said to have any decided affinity. His art is thoroughly individual, extremely limited both in its aim and its mode of expression, but within its limits almost perfect. Grace is its distinguishing characteristic: a happy combination of antique beauty of line with modern sentiment: a poetic imagination kept so strictly under control that it never strays—like Blake's—into realms unknown, and a gentle humour revealed to us by delicate touches rather than broad strokes.

Stothard's life was almost as placid as his art. Great sorrows came to him in it, but none seemed to disturb the sweet serenity of his spirit. "A child," says his admiring daughter-in-law and biographer, "was not more guileless than he was, or more thoroughly unacquainted with the selfishness practised by half mankind. He had a world of honour, worth, and beauty within himself, and in that he lived and moved."

This "guileless" artist, who has left us in his works an almost inexhaustible store of pleasant ideas, was born in London, on the 17th of August, 1755, and thus comes first in chronological order among the painters whose lives are here recorded. His father was a native of Yorkshire, but had come to London in 1750, and at the time of his son's birth was a prosperous innkeeper in Long Acre. Thomas, who was an only son, being delicate as a child, was sent when he was five years old to be brought up in Yorkshire under the care of his uncle, who placed him with a good dame who lived at Acomb, and kept a little village school. Here his first inclinations to-

wards art were stimulated by some engravings by Strange which hung in his nurse's room. "I gazed at these," he says, "till a love of art grew within me, and a desire to imitate what was on her walls. I got bits of paper and pencil and made many attempts. I could see that my hand was improving, and I had sketched some things not amiss, when at eight years old I was removed to Stutton, the birthplace of my father." Here he continued until he was thirteen, when he was sent by his father to a fashionable boarding school at Ilford, in Essex, where, while learning languages, dancing, and other accomplishments, he stood, it seems, a chance of being half starved. His father's death, however, which took place in 1770, brought him home to live with his widowed mother, who, finding him strongly inclined towards art, wisely did the best for him she could by apprenticing him to a draughtsman of patterns for brocaded silks, which were then much in vogue. Here the boy not only learnt to draw patterns, but spent all his leisure in making fanciful designs, chiefly from the Iliad and Spenser's "Fairy Queen."

His master kindly encouraged him in this, and when this master died, his widow, who carried on the business, seems also to have taken pride in the cleverness of the youthful apprentice. By her means some of his drawings were seen by an influential personage, Mr. Harrison, editor of the "Novelist's Magazine," who gave him on the spot a novel to read and illustrate, paying him half a guinea for the three drawings he had ready at the end of a week.

This first success decided Stothard in his future career. He gave up pattern-drawing and took to book-illustration. He did not gain regular employment in this, however, immediately, but was obliged, he says, to add a little to his narrow income by now and then painting some small family portraits amongst his acquaintance.

The first designs which brought him into notice and showed his distinctive talents were those engraved for an edition of "Ossian," and for "Bell's Poets," wherein he found numerous subjects that suited his taste. In 1780, also, he began to work regularly for the "Novelist's Magazine," to which he contributed as many as a hundred and forty-

eight designs, paid for at the rate of a guinea a-piece. From this time forth, indeed, he never seems to have lacked work. Commissions of all kinds poured down upon him, and he, following the good advice that Ghirlandajo is said to have given to his pupils, never refused anything that was offered him, even although it might be for fashion plates or decanter labels, which may be taken as the modern equivalent for Ghirlandajo's "petticoat panniers." His pencil in fact did not disdain to add a grace to the most trivial subjects, while it was worthily employed in illustrating some of the noblest productions of our literature. Altogether Wornum reckons that his designs must amount to about five thousand in number, of which more than three thousand have been engraved.

Soon he was employed in painting as well as drawing. He had entered as a student in the Royal Academy in 1778, and like many other students was kindly admitted to the house of its then president, the great Sir Joshua, but from the first his method of painting appears to have been peculiarly his own, and it is said that he never painted from a model. During his student time he lived in lodgings in the Strand, with his friend Samuel Shelly, who afterwards became celebrated as a miniature-painter; but before long he fell in love in his quiet fashion with a young lady named Rebecca Watkins, whom he managed to win and marry before he was thirty. An amusing story illustrative of his serene temperament is told of his conduct on his wedding-day. After conducting his bride home from church, he walked away to the Academy as usual to draw from the antique until three o'clock, taking no more notice of the event of the day than just to ask a fellow student, when they left together, to "come home and dine and meet a family party," adding, "for I have this day taken to myself a wife."

A few years after his marriage he purchased a house in Newman Street, No. 28, where he continued to reside for the rest of his life. Here his mother, to whom he was always loving and attentive, came to live with him, and here numerous children, several of whom died in early infancy, were born. By this time his fame was fully

established, and in 1794 he was elected full academician, having been already for some years an associate of the Royal Academy.

In 1799 he received an important, but scarcely suitable, commission from the Marquis of Exeter. This was to adorn the grand staircase at Burleigh House with paintings. Haydon would have been delighted to have been let loose on such a space of wall, and the work would have exactly suited his powers; but it may be doubted whether it was altogether within Stothard's range. War, Intemperance, and the Descent of Orpheus into Hades were the subjects he chose, and he took four years over the work, executing it with the most conscientious pains. I have never seen these great wall-paintings, in which the figures are eight feet high, and in other respects different from Stothard's usual conceptions, but I cannot imagine them to be very satisfactory, although Mr. Alfred Stothard reckons them "the finest examples of his father's work which this country possesses," and says that their colouring is as fresh now as when first laid on.

But it is to Stothard's drawings rather than to his paintings that most persons turn for the finest examples of his art. His designs for "The Pilgrim's Progress," for instance, a work which lends itself admirably to his mode of illustration, have a refined grace and purity rarely equalled even among his own graceful and pure works. His designs for the "Decameron" also have a fitness and beauty peculiarly their own, and many of his illustrations to the poets, especially those to Rogers's "Italy," executed in his later life, show a most delicate feeling for ideal loveliness. Few of these works, it is true, can be said to evince any great creative power, and it is only a biographer too devoted to be discriminating who would be likely to find in them anything of grandeur or sublimity.[1] But if they never rose to the sublime, they at all events never fell to the ridiculous, but ever remained in that dim borderland of ideal beauty in which so many artists and poets have found sources of inspiration. Stothard's ideal

[1] Mrs. Bray quotes "The Conflict with Apollyon," in "The Pilgrim's Progress," as an instance of the sublime in art.

of female beauty is exquisitely refined and poetical, but he seems only to have conceived one type, and it must be owned, that though always charming, one is apt to get tired at last of his gracefully inane beings without muscle and without thought, even though their drapery falls in faultless flow of line, and their movements have the measure of a rhythmic dance.[1]

His quality of gentle humour is perhaps best seen, not in his avowedly humorous designs, such as those to "Don Quixote," and some of his illustrations to the novelists, but in delicate little touches in his more sentimental illustrations. It is abundantly visible also in his world-famous and ever-delightful "Canterbury Pilgrims."

The history of the origin of the "Canterbury Pilgrims" is curiously involved, and unhappily caused a bitter feeling of indignation in the minds of two simple-minded artists, each of whom was utterly incapable of seeking to cheat or injure the other. One would naturally imagine that the subject of Chaucer's "Pilgrims" had been chosen by Stothard himself as one especially suited to his style and powers, but this was not so. It was suggested to him by the keen-witted picture-dealer and engraver Cromek, who told him that he "was sure he would be able to make something of it," and in fine commissioned him to paint a picture of it, for which he agreed to give sixty guineas. But Cromek did not mention that he had seen just before a sketch for such a work in Blake's studio, and had been so much delighted with it that Blake believed he had commissioned him to execute this subject for the purpose of engraving.[2]

By this means both artists were at work at the same

[1] Professor Colvin, in some articles in "The Portfolio" on "Children in Italian and English Design," has pointed out the delightful playfulness of Stothard's delineations of child-life: "Nothing tenderer, sweeter, full of freer or more delicate human babyhood than the infants of Stothard; nothing purer or more refined with the grace of a not far-fetched ideal in their dress and ways, than his sporting groups of children a little older. And for fictitious children for a mythology of his own, in which he diversifies and plays with the far-descended type of the ornamental lovelet, there is not, nor has been, any one like him."—ED.

[2] See note, page 163; also Vol. I., page 409, and 411 note.

time on the same subject, Blake even calling on Stothard during the progress of his picture, and praising it highly, while Stothard talked of introducing Blake's portrait among his pilgrims "as a mark of esteem for him and his works." But when the truth came to be known, and Stothard's picture, with every possible help in the way of puffing and advertisement, was exhibited all over the country, drawing thousands to see it, while poor Blake's was simply repudiated by Cromek, and the commission which he asserted had been given him treated as one of his dreams, it is easy to understand the heartburning that followed. Even the peaceful nature of Stothard was aroused, and he openly accused Blake of having copied his design, while Blake unjustly imagined that Stothard had been privy to what he considered to be Cromek's double-dealing. The quarrel was a sad one, and Blake, most undeservedly it would seem, got all the blame of it, as well as all the suffering; his beautiful fresco of the "Canterbury Pilgrimage," although preferred by Lamb and other enthusiastic admirers to Stothard's, met with little recognition by the general public; his exhibition passed almost unheeded, and his engraving met with but few subscribers.

Stothard's picture, on the other hand, soon became immensely popular; indeed it is by this rich and yet exquisitely sculpturesque composition that his fame chiefly lives. No picture of the English school is perhaps better known. We can scarcely think of our "poet of the early prime" without calling up a vision of Stothard's interpretation of his famous "Pilgrimage." The jolly miller, "drunken of ale," who leads the procession, the sweet prioress whose "gretest othe n'as but by Saint Eloy," the "gentil pardonere," the friar, the knight on his white horse, the merry wife of Bath, and all the other well-known characters of Chaucer's immortal poem—we see them all as reflected on Stothard's canvas.

Of course the artist, after his usual manner, has idealized the poet's description. The fresh vigour of Chaucer, and the powerful realism of his conceptions, become weakened, as they do in all modern renderings of his verse, in passing through Stothard's mind; still the painter has lent a

sweet grace and gentle humour of his own to the poet's theme, and it is but a narrow view of art that refuses to accept of these qualities because others of a more sturdy kind are wanting.

Stothard has none of the qualities that are generally needed for popular appreciation. Only an educated eye, one might suppose, would be likely to perceive the charm of his well-balanced composition, his skilful grouping, and his perfectly graceful form. He never, it is certain, aimed at hitting the popular taste, yet few artists have pleased it more assuredly. It was "art for art's sake" with him as much as it was with Blake; yet the one contrived to find profitable employment, while the other was left to his visions. Stothard, it is said, and it may well be believed, had such a dislike to clap-trap, or to any artifices for exciting admiration, that he made it a practice never to paint a picture expressly for exhibition or up to "exhibition pitch," as it was professionally called, but used, when the time came for sending in works to Somerset House, to take down any from his wall "*for which he might happen to have frames to fit*," and send them off, refusing even to varnish them on varnishing day, saying that he did not approve of such helps; every picture should be painted so as to produce its due effect without them. "By this means it often happened," says Mrs. Bray, "that the harmony, and repose, and truth of colour which were so beautiful and so perfectly natural in him, were in a moment overpowered by the meretricious glare of the place."

The "Canterbury Pilgrims," however, was exhibited by itself, without any disturbing influence. It was shown in all the great towns of England, and also in Edinburgh and Dublin, for the usual shilling, and soon became a universal favourite. The admirable engraving by Schiavonetti was brought out by subscription at the rate of six guineas for proofs and three for ordinary impressions, and had altogether the largest sale that any work of the kind had ever met with in England. The original painting, for which, as before stated, Cromek had paid the artist sixty guineas (forty more, that had been promised after the subscrip-

tions for the engraving had been got in, were never forthcoming), was sold by this clever man of business for £500. It is now in the possession of Sir William Miles, Bart., of Leigh Court. Stothard, however, painted three replicas of this famous picture, one of smaller size for his friend Samuel Rogers, the poet, another for Mr. J. Benson, of Doncaster, and another, it is not stated for whom. This possibly may have been the one which appeared at the "Old Masters" in 1872, lent by Lady Marian Alford.[1]

At a much later date, when Stothard was quite an old man, he made a sort of companion design to his "Pilgrimage," entitled "The Flitch of Bacon," a long festal procession with grouping similar to the "Pilgrimage," but far weaker both in composition and drawing. He never painted this subject, but simply drew it in sepia for engraving.

Stothard's life resolves itself, it will be seen, very much into a simple record of the work accomplished in it. It had, indeed, scarcely any incidents to break its placid monotony, and enliven the biographer's page, and there seems to have been little of aspiration and little of disappointment in it. He took whatever came to him in the way of commissions cheerfully, never stopping to consider whether they were worthy of his genius, but making them worthy by the manner in which he executed them, never doing careless work, never sparing any pains in performing the task set before him to the best of his ability.

The next important work upon which he was engaged after the "Canterbury Pilgrims" was the design for the Wellington Shield, a shield in silver presented by the merchants and bankers of London to the great Duke in memory of his victories. The commission for this magnificent trophy was thrown open to competition, and such was the general opinion of Stothard's powers that he was applied to by every goldsmith who went in for the undertaking to furnish a design. The one prepared by him in the short space of three weeks for Messrs. Ward and Green, of Ludgate Hill, whom he selected to favour, was

[1] A water-colour sketch also of this subject is now in the possession of Mr. Henry Vaughan.

so infinitely superior to all others that it was chosen at once without one dissentient voice, and excited universal admiration.

His next work was of a different kind. In the summer of 1822 he went to Edinburgh with a commission to paint the ceiling of the Advocates' Library in that city. He kept a journal while in Scotland, but it merely gives a brief and uninteresting record of the manner in which he spent his time, without revealing anything as to his thoughts or feelings. He was always, indeed, extremely shy of expressing these, either in speech or writing, and though he seems often to have kept a diary and to have written a fair amount of letters, none of those published, at all events, let us in the least degree into the secret of his inner life.

After his work in Edinburgh, which took him from the 4th of June to the 1st of August, 1822, as we learn from his journal, he next, in 1825, when he was already seventy years of age, journeyed into Derbyshire, in order to visit the scenes which Izaac Walton has celebrated in his "Angler." He was still at this time working hard for the booksellers with all his faculties unimpaired, though with a perceptible increase of feebleness in execution. His designs for Rogers's poems, for instance, which he illustrated conjointly with Turner about this date, are exquisitely graceful and happily conceived little sketches, but slighter and weaker than his earlier works of the same kind.

The same may be said of his illustrations to Shakespeare, and of those to Walton's "Angler," though these latter, with their refined perception of landscape beauty, have a distinct charm. He seems to have greatly enjoyed his excursion along the banks of the Dove, and has left us a fuller record of it in his journal than was his wont, as the following extracts will show:—

"24th July.—After an early breakfast, we went down to Pike Dale; in the way stopped to draw a distant view of the Fishing-House, and Pike Dale beyond it. Went to the river and found W. drawing the Pike. I crossed the Dove by a foot-bridge and drew the same view, but nearer on the Staffordshire side. After drawing for a little time

it began to rain, which compelled us both to run for shelter under a rock affording convenient space and a seat for us. Here our patience was exercised for some hours with very little intermission. When the rain ceased P. joined us, who had been confined for shelter in the Fishing-House. About the same time a gentleman came over the bridge: he was a clergyman, and resided at Cotton's house, in apartments facing the garden in front, into which we went. . . . We were shown, by one of the daughters, a cave formed by a cleft in the rock, for which she had a lantern. Next we were shown the castle, near the house. We were afterwards accommodated with tea and some toasted bacon, which P. and W. seemed much to relish. Took leave of the widow, the mistress of the house; she sent a little girl, her youngest daughter, to show us the way to Alstonfield, where we arrived by half-past eight, and went immediately to the church; and on returning I met W. and P. praising the ale they had drunk. Returned again to the church, heard an organ played within, found the west door not locked; desirous to view the interior, went in; saw Cotton's pew, much ornamented, in a corner by itself.

"July 25th.—After breakfast went and drew the church on the south-east side, leaning on the outside of the church-yard wall, under some trees, for shelter from threatened flying showers. We did not return to our inn, but proceeded across a field by a footpath, which soon became so precipitous as to retain the marks of alternate footsteps, as steps leading down into the hollow of Dove Dale. After descending, I was so struck with the romantic appearance of cottages, with their accompaniment of little gardens, scattered on the sides of this steep declivity, contrasting with the wildness of the scene, that I drew it, after crossing a bridge near a water-mill, which gives it the name of Mill Dale. Left this romantic little village in search of an elevation mentioned by Cotton, named Hanson Toot. On ascending and crossing some fields enclosed with walls of loose stones, we reached the top of the hill. A shower coming on, we ran towards an enclosed plantation of trees for shelter. From this place we had

an extensive view. The winding course of the Dove not visible, but trenching the country with steep declivities, giving the view somewhat of a mountainous appearance. . . . P. seeing a countryman or two walking on the path we had quitted for shelter, went and inquired for Hanson Toot. They told him he was on it, agreeably to our prior conjectures. I had by this time completed a sketch of this extensive scene, and the rain ceasing, we made direct for the Dove, down the ravine of winding and steep descent. When two-thirds down, and before we could see the river below, we caught sight of Alstonfield Church, terminating and crowning our view up Dove Dale. In expectation of more interesting scenery, we descended; and at the bottom, and close by the Dove, on our left hand, two caves engaged our attention. One we entered, to avoid some sprinkling rain. Attempted to draw the interior, but, this requiring more time, desisted. Went down the river to Pickering's Tower; as I was drawing there, and opposite the Pike, at the bottom of which was a cave, was frequently obliged to fly into it for shelter from successive showers. Went down the river, exceedingly delighted with the succession of pyramidal rocks, projecting their spiral forms above the hanging woods—too many to enumerate. We at length reached Thorp Cloud; here I looked back to compare my former drawing. Proceeded towards Ashbourne; met the woman P. had commissioned to procure refreshments. Passed Thorp Cloud and reached Ashbourne, and heard that Mr. White, who was expected by Mr. P., was gone after us. He had traced us, but did not join us till supper."

The journal goes on in the same simple fashion through several more successive days. It seems to have been the greatest literary effort that Stothard ever made, for, as before said, it was not his wont to record his thoughts with pen and ink otherwise than in designs.

I have alluded at the beginning of this memoir to the sorrows that came to Stothard during the course of his life. For a long period his domestic happiness appears to have remained unclouded, but towards the close of his career, griefs and bereavements gathered darkly over him,

so that by the loss of one dear one after the other his still serene old age was left sadly desolate.

The first of these losses came by the death of his eldest son, a youth of great promise, who was accidentally shot dead by a schoolfellow. A mysterious story is told by Stothard's biographer relating to this sad event, but the evidence upon which it is founded is scarcely sufficient to establish a supernatural occurrence. That Stothard and his wife believed it to be supernatural may well have been the case. His simple nature would not have been likely to examine psychological conditions.

To the loss of this young son, though not until after a long interval, followed that of his next son, Charles, the first husband of Mrs. Bray, who likewise met with a sudden death by falling from a ladder whilst engaged in making a drawing of some ancient stained glass in a church window in Devon. He was an archæologist who was gradually rising into note, and who is still known by his work on "Monumental Effigies."

About the same time another son, Henry, was struck with a disease which rendered him a hopeless invalid for life, and in the spring of 1825, the poor mother, who had long been in a most distressing state of health, was called away. Stothard, with strange self-command, made a sketch of this beloved wife, as she lay dead resting from all her sorrows, remarking to a friend, as he gazed upon her tranquil features, that the sight "filled him with pleasurable feelings." For his old and loved friend Flaxman he had also to mourn about the same time.

But notwithstanding these thickly falling sorrows, which were enough to overwhelm a less resigned and tranquil spirit, Stothard, though now over seventy, and deaf and enfeebled, still continued to work on patiently at his art, and to attend in the evening to his duties as librarian of the Royal Academy, to which post he had been unanimously elected in 1817. All those who knew him during these last years of his life testify to the impression of sweet benignity that he made upon them. He had not, it is true, the courtly ease of manner, nor the social qualities of Reynolds, he was indeed somewhat reserved in

society, but with his friends he was ever cheerful and pleasant, his deafness no doubt aiding him to preserve, like Sir Joshua, an unruffled equanimity of temper when more ardent and less deaf disputants were in combative force.

All through his life he seems to have kept clear of the storms that so often shake the artistic mind. No high hopes disappointed, no ambitions baffled, no appointments sought for and not gained. Beginning in quite an insignificant position as a mere mechanical draughtsman, he gradually rose, entirely by his own talents and perseverance, to be universally recognized by his countrymen and brother artists as one of the most delightful artists of his time.[1] Whilst others with bolder aims, but less real capacity, were throwing their energies out on huge canvases in the vain hope that strenuous endeavour and the exclusive study of the antique would produce high art and bring them immortal fame, this simple-minded book-illustrator, who never seems to have cared much about fame, nor to have purposely studied the antique, though he was undoubtedly gently influenced by its spirit, patiently went on making one charming little design after another, until at last, on the 27th of April, 1834, when he was eighty-four years of age, death came quietly and carried him away from his labours. These labours, though they never seem to have wearied him, had been unremitting.

Besides his painted works, which must have been very numerous, for we find small specimens in almost every large collection, he made, as before stated, over five thousand designs for engraving, nearly three thousand of which may be studied in the print-room of the British Museum. Of these, his early illustrations to the "Novelist's Magazine," especially those for "Clarissa Harlowe" and "Tristram Shandy," are perhaps the most distinctly characteristic of his humour—a quality which, though it never obtrudes itself, often gives a racy flavour to his productions. The illustrations to the "Pilgrim's Progress"

[1] Constable, in one of his letters, writes of him thus: "Poor man! The only Elysium he has in this world is found in his own enchanting works."

have been mentioned before as among the most beautiful creations of his art, giving, as they do, a sort of subdued classic grace to the fervent images of the bold Puritan dreamer.

By these and by hundreds of other delightful little illustrations, the name of Stothard will be likely to be remembered far more than by his oil-paintings, which are not in general remarkable. He was eminently a sketcher, and, like Blake, attached more importance to outline than to anything else, saying "that shadows and colours can only give substance to what outline can alone produce." He did not, however, like his visionary friend, anathematize Rubens and Titian as the demons of painting, but always spoke with the deepest reverence of Raphael and Rubens, the former of whom undoubtedly influenced the style of his design, and the latter, it seems to me, his mode of colouring. His scheme of colour as an oil-painter was singularly rich for one so much occupied with design, but he dealt too much in oppositions and violently contrasted effects. He laid on his colour with bold, dashing strokes, but instead of this producing, as he perhaps imagined, the magnificent glow of Rubens, it gave his small canvases, which required a delicate and minute finish, a crude and sketchy appearance. There are six paintings by him in the National Gallery, for the most part rather weak and silly productions; but there is one called a "Greek Vintage," to which the above remarks respecting his colouring scarcely apply, for it is really a finely coloured work, with a sense of rhythmic movement in it equal to anything in his designs. He exhibited in all ninety-two works at the Royal Academy, of which he became a member in 1794. He does not seem to have been intimate with any of his brother academicians, nor with any artist except Flaxman, who was from first to last his devoted friend; but the general esteem in which he was held is well illustrated by an instance related by Mrs. Bray, who says that on one occasion, at a general meeting at the Royal Academy, the weather being very cold, Sir Thomas Lawrence, the then president, begged the members to keep their hats on. Stothard had left his in the ante-room, but on perceiving

this there was quite a rush of members to fetch it for him, so greatly was the venerable and infirm old master respected. He seems, indeed, through life to have been a singularly lovable man, never making enemies, except of poor Blake, never stirred by erratic impulses, nor prompted to any mighty effort, never achieving anything great as his too-partial biographer would have us believe, but dignifying the small things of art by the charming manner in which he conceived and executed them.[1]

[1] With reference to the charges against Cromek made by Mr. Gilchrist in his life of Blake, it may be said that they were objected to both by the "Westminster Review" and the "Athenæum," at the time they were published. Mr. Gilchrist offered no proof of them, but they would seem to have been made chiefly on the authority of old Thomas Smith, author of the "Life of Nollekens," and that gossiping little work called "A Book for a Rainy Day."—Ed.

JOHN CROME.

IN the preceding "Lives" Allan Cunningham has only included two landscape-painters—Wilson and Gainsborough. He speaks of these two eminent masters as having "laid the foundation of our school of landscape;" but it is probable that, had he lived to bring out a third edition of his work, he would have added other names, and especially that of John Crome, of whom he has written elsewhere a slight but appreciative memoir.[1] Indeed, in a list written out by him of painters whom he intended to include in a future edition, I find not only the name of John Crome, but also those of John Constable and Alex. Nasmyth; so that it is evident that he by no means slighted or overlooked the claims of landscape painters. Still less at the present day can these claims be overlooked, when to the great name of Turner in the immediate past may be added a number of others, both of dead and living artists who have devoted themselves to the faithful study of nature, and whose works have raised the English landscape school, founded by Wilson and Gainsborough, to a high and distinctive position in English art. But at the time when Crome was born, in 1769, landscape painting was still an unprofitable employment, and only Gainsborough, who was enabled to live by portrait, had ventured to make the beautiful home scenery of England the subject of his art. All other landscape painters chose Italy for their theme, or composed landscape according to the prescribed rules.

Gainsborough, therefore, may be regarded as the true founder of the school to which Crome belonged, and it is significant that both these men, who were the first of our artists to be attracted by English landscape, were born, not in the wilder or more beautiful parts of England, but

[1] In "The Cabinet Gallery of Pictures by the First Masters," 1834.

amidst the flat, low, and monotonous scenery of our eastern counties.

John Crome, or "Old" Crome, as he is usually styled to distinguish him from his eldest son, John Bernay Crome, who was also a painter, began his life in a low public-house in Norwich, on the 21st of December, 1769. His father was a journeyman weaver by trade; but the public-house is spoken of by Dawson Turner as the "paternal roof," so we must suppose that his birth there was not merely accidental. Possibly it was kept by his mother, while the father earned what he could by weaving. In any case, it is certain that his early surroundings were of the poorest description, and it is not likely that he received more than the mere rudiments of education. At twelve years of age he started in life for himself in the capacity of errand-boy to Dr. Rigby, a physician in Norwich, father to the present Lady Eastlake. But finding the distribution of medicine an unsatisfactory employment for his youthful energies, he soon gave it up, and of his own accord apprenticed himself for seven years to a certain Frank Whisler, a house and sign painter in Norwich, being prompted thereunto, no doubt, by dawning artistic impulses.

Here he learnt the use of the brush, and quickly became ambitious of applying it to other subjects than the painting of cornices and coaches. After his apprenticeship was over he worked for a time as journeyman to Whisler, and is said to have been the first painter who practised the foolish custom of *graining* in imitation of the natural marks in wood.

During this period he formed an intimate friendship with Robert Ladbrooke, who was then a prentice-hand like himself, only to a less congenial trade, being a printer instead of a house-painter. The two youths spent all their spare time in drawing and studying together, sometimes buying an old print for the purpose of copying it, but more often—in Crome's case, at all events—taking cheap lessons in the fields and lanes round about Norwich.

It seems that some of these early efforts of Crome in

the direction of landscape attracted the attention of a gentleman named Harvey, who was somewhat of a connoisseur. He encouraged him to persevere, gave him personal instruction and much valuable advice. Moreover, what was more useful than all, Mr. Harvey possessed a small collection of Flemish and Dutch pictures at his house at Cathon, which he threw open to Crome, thus affording him an opportunity of studying the works of a group of masters who had arrived at the highest excellence under almost exactly the same conditions of climate and scenery as those in which he himself was placed.

It was at one time a somewhat favourite theory with certain writers that climate had a supreme influence over the production of works of art, and that the great achievements of Greece and Rome were due in a great measure to superior advantages of sky and soil.

If this were so, it might certainly as well be affirmed that there was something peculiarly favourable to the production of a school of landscape in low, moist pasture-lands and a flat expanse of country; for the Dutch—the greatest landscape painters, on the whole, that the world has ever seen—had mainly these objects for their contemplation, and our three best painters of purely English home scenery—Gainsborough, Crome, and Constable—were all born in our eastern counties, and made their flat pastures, wide heaths, green lanes, and sandy shores, the subjects of their study. Gainsborough was undoubtedly the true founder of the English school of landscape; but landscape painting was so little regarded in his time that although Sir Joshua Reynolds once, to the mortification of Wilson, proposed the health of Gainsborough at an Academy dinner as "the best landscape painter of his day,"[1] his beautiful paintings of Suffolk scenery hung neglected on the walls of his painting-room even at the time when his fame was established and his portraits in the highest demand.

Even in Crome's time landscape painting was still an un-

[1] Wilson is reported to have growled aloud on hearing this, "Ay, and the best portrait painter, too!" whereat the courtly President apologized, saying that he was not aware of Wilson being present.

profitable branch of art, and it was only by combining it with teaching that he contrived to make a living. It would seem that at one time he had had some thoughts of setting up his easel in London; but, according to his biographers, he found competitors so numerous, and the demand for landscapes so very small, that he determined to quit the larger field and return to Norwich, where, at all events, if other things failed, he could support himself by his first avocation of house-painting.

Sir William Beechey, the fortune-favoured Academician, who himself had began life as a house-painter in Norwich, became acquainted with Crome about this time. He speaks of him as "an awkward, uninformed country lad," who, however, "was extremely shrewd in all his remarks upon art, though he wanted words and terms to express his meaning."

Whenever Crome went to London he passed a great part of his time in Beechey's painting-room, gaining all the practical instruction he could. Other friends, or "patrons," as they were then called, he found, besides Mr. Harvey, before mentioned, in Mr. John Gurney, of Earlham, and Mr. Dawson Turner, who afterwards wrote an appreciative essay upon his work;[1] but in spite of the help afforded by these and a few other Norfolk gentlemen, it is to be feared that Crome had a hard struggle before assuring a position. To add to the difficulty, both he and his early friend Ladbrooke, who had formerly shared the garret they used as a studio, had married—married sisters, and families were now beginning to grow up around them. Ladbrooke was now painting portraits at five shillings a-head, and the two friends continued for a time a sort of artistic partnership they had established in their boy days. But the profits, as may be supposed, were scarcely remunerative, and they were soon driven to discontinue their division.

Crome, indeed, found himself obliged to devote more and more time to teaching, which brought him for a long period far better remuneration than landscape painting. Insen-

[1] Published with a selection of Crome etchings in 1838.

sibly, also, it brought him into greater local repute, for it made him known in many families of high standing around Norwich, who commissioned pictures and spread his fame at all events in his own county. "As a teacher," says Dawson Turner, "he was eminently successful. He seldom failed to inspire into his pupils a portion of his own enthusiasm; and no small number of the most talented among them so entered into his feelings, and so followed in his track, that time only was wanting to make them successful imitators of his style. Had his life been spared a few years longer, there would not have failed to have been a Norwich school of art. The seeds were sown, but had not taken sufficient root to flourish without the fostering care of the hand that reared them."

This was written many years ago. Since then the Norwich school has acquired a recognized position in the history of English art, and especially during the last few years a conviction has been gradually spreading that it contained masters really worth knowing. Its rise, as Mr. Wedmore remarks in his appreciative study of Crome, is certainly a phenomenon in art, for it is about the only instance we have of a purely local school arising in any of our English counties, and preserving to the end its distinctive character; and it is one, moreover, which we are not likely to see repeated, it being more and more the tendency of all artists of decided talent to gravitate towards London. Crome was not even an exhibitor at the Royal Academy until 1806, and during the whole of his career the total number of his works sent for exhibition only amounted to fourteen.

There was no temptation for him to send them. After a time he achieved a large local celebrity, and his paintings were quickly sold to Norfolk purchasers without the trouble of sending them to London or the intermediation of dealers. He never, it is true, got a very high price for his works, fifty pounds being, it would seem, about as much as he usually got for a finely finished work, even to the end of his life; but he managed to achieve a comfortable independence, and to live in respectable *bourgeois* style in his native city, where he brought up a large family with credit.

Being so much of a prophet in his own country he doubtless cared little about a more extended reputation; and his friend Cotman's experiences prove that he was probably wise in choosing to reign supreme in Norfolk, rather than to contend for precedence in London. However this may be, it is certain that he remained in his own day almost unknown to the London art world; and indeed it was not until quite recently, when the Royal Academy organized an exhibition of his works at Burlington House, that he can be said to have really become generally known beyond his native county. This exhibition cannot be said to have revealed him as any supreme genius, but it showed him as a patient observer of nature and faithful painter of some of her many effects. For the first time it gave the world also an opportunity of judging of the merits of some of the other Norwich artists, who were formed under his influence. For one of the reasons that doubtless made Crome independent of the London exhibitions was that, in 1803, he, in conjunction with several amateurs and a number of young artists whom he had by this time gathered around him, founded what was called "The Norwich Society of Artists," for the purpose of encouraging a love of the Fine Arts and promoting artistic culture.

This little Society, according to Mr. Wodderspoon, who gave an account of it in the "Norwich Mercury" of the day, was in reality "a small joint-stock association, both of accomplishments and worldly goods. . . . The members met fortnightly, at seven in the evening, and from that hour until half-past eight, they sedulously and solely occupied themselves in the study of the fine arts, connected with which department they possessed both a useful and extensive series of books, drawings, engravings, and paintings." At the expiration of this period, a discussion took place on some subject previously proposed, connected with the objects of the Society, and the president submitted one or more topics for the "reflection of the company before the next meeting." Another excellent arrangement was that members were permitted to study at the rooms at other times than the fortnightly meetings, by the payment of a shilling for candles or fire when required.

One can easily understand the impulse that this praiseworthy little effort at culture must have given to the arts at Norwich at a time when artistic training was not so easily gained as at the present day. Art-schools in connection with South Kensington were as yet in the far future, and aspiring artists of humble origin had for the most part to discover the methods of painting for themselves, many of them not even having Crome's advantage of being apprenticed to a house-painter.

The first exhibition of the Norwich Society was held in 1805, two years after its commencement. It contained 223 works in oil and water-colour, and several specimens of sculpture and engraving. Twenty-three of these works were contributed by Crome, who, it would seem, must have been travelling about this time, for among the subjects enumerated are "A Scene in Cumberland," "Interior of Tintern Abbey," "View of Piercefield-on-the-Wye," "Part of Chepstow Castle," "Part of the Chapel in Chepstow Castle," and "Waterfall at St. Michael's-le-Flemings, Westmoreland," against which last it is written in the catalogue "coloured on the spot." By this it would appear that the painting in question was in water-colours; for Crome, strange to say, seldom painted in oils out of doors. He made careful studies and sketches from nature, and must have been gifted with remarkable powers of observation, for he rarely misses any detail of sky, stream, or leaf; but his pictures nevertheless were painted in his studio like those of his prototypes the Dutch landscapists, Paul Potter, whose works in many respects are dissimilar to those of the rest of the school, being about the only one of them who really painted out of doors. Crome, however, was an enthusiastic student of nature, and always insisted on his pupils following her teaching also. It was told of him that once a brother-painter met him out in the fields surrounded by a number of young people, and remarked, "Why, I thought I had left you in the city engaged in your school?" "I am in my school," replied Crome, "and teaching my scholars from the only true examples. Do you think," pointing to a lovely distant view, "that either you or I can do better than that?" By these habits

he became thoroughly versed in all the characteristics of Norfolk landscape, characteristics so peculiar that they can scarcely be mistaken for those of any other county. The subjects of his art were simple and commonplace enough: just a tumble-down old cottage with thatched roof, a boat-house on the Yare, a lane of midsummer greenery, a wide heath with a stony road winding across it, a windmill on a Norfolk hill, or an ancient dwelling washed by the sluggish river in his native city, reminding one of some similar building in Ghent or Rotterdam; or, simpler still, merely an oak or pollard willow standing alone by the side of the road or stream, but all painted with a thorough comprehension of their nature, of the light of the sky that fell upon them, and the rich moisture of the land that produced them. There is no mistaking one of Crome's Norfolk views. It is not merely that the features of the county are distinctive, but that he himself is thoroughly individual and native, and thus sees more of beauty than a stranger would in the low flat fields, the long unbroken reaches of the streams, the monotonous rows of pollard willows or poplars, or the dismal "broads," only enlivened at times by "water frolics" and the wasteful lanes with rich tangled hedges that modern cultivation has now for the most part pruned away. "All about him," says Allan Cunningham, "is sterling English; he has no foreign airs or put-on graces; he studied and understood the woody scenery of his native land with the skill of a botanist and the eye of a poet; to him a grove was not a mere mass of picturesque stems and foliage; each tree claimed a separate sort of handling; he touched them according to their kind; with him an ash hung with its silver keys was different from an oak covered with acorns. Nor was it his pleasure only to show nature silent and animate; to the grove he gave its tenants, to the glades their cattle and their cottages; nothing was mean, all was natural and striking."

This individuality of his foliage is especially seen in such pictures as the famous Poringland Oak, in the possession of Mr. Steward, in which every leaf has its own separate distance, but yet only serves to build up, as it were, the magnificent whole; for it is not detail for its

own sake that Crome gives; he does not, like some of the Dutch painters, intrude minute finish of surface until all we can think of is the skill of the master, and not the beauty or interest of the work, but he simply finishes his work because he loves it, and wishes others to find as much beauty in it as he does himself. "He knew a particular tree," writes Mr. Wedmore, "as you know the face of a friend, the light and shade of the particular hour helping the expression which the form after all determined." With animal nature he was far less successful. His cattle and horses have none of the individuality of his trees. They are simply introduced for the sake of effect, as also are his men and women, who are treated still worse, for Crome, although he liked to people his landscapes, had even less notion than Turner of painting the human figure. His old women in red cloaks, his men and boys who drive the market cart, and his jolly sailors just putting off to sea or unloading their fish on the Yarmouth sands, have no character, and would generally be far better out of the composition, for they are often badly drawn. Not so his drawing of shipping, in which the intricacies of masts and rigging interest him like the stems and branches of trees.

This is especially noticeable in one of the finest pictures in the recent exhibition of his works at Burlington House—a view of the interior of Yarmouth Harbour, with the shipbuilding yards on one side and a large number of tall masted ships lying at anchor within the dock. Here all the delicate lines of masts and rigging are drawn with a care and skill that tell of the enjoyment the painter found in his work. This picture is remarkable also for other points of excellence, and affords a good example of Crome's powers as a painter. In the centre, putting off from some vessel, is a small boat, with three figures in it, one of whom wears a red dress, the effect of which is enhanced by being reflected in the smooth water. All the reflections are seen, indeed, as vividly in the smooth water of the harbour as are the objects themselves, and give a curious sense of mystic beauty to the ordinary busy aspect of the scene, which, moreover, is lifted above the common-place by being set in a soft haze of yellow light, such as we see in many

of Cuyp's paintings. The scene, indeed, might well be taken for one of Cuyp's views of Dordrecht, so masterly is its treatment of the mellow light of a warm misty day. It was lent by Mr. Edwin H. Lawrence.

"Yarmouth Jetty," lent by S. H. de Zoete, with a boat just putting off to some shipping seen in the distance, and another of Yarmouth Jetty (No. 38) lent by T. G. Colman, where the boats just come from the fishing are being unloaded on the beach, and form a busy scene on the sands, enacted beneath a darkening sky that makes one tremble for the fate of any fisher who may happen not to have returned, show the same thorough understanding of sea and sky under different aspects.

Of his extensive landscapes, embracing generally a far-reaching view over heath and hill, with a windmill or two to give human interest to the scene, the well-known picture of "Mousehold Heath," in the National Gallery, may be taken as a good example. This was painted about the year 1816, and shows his powers at their full. He painted it, as he once remarked, for the sake of "air and space;" and, in truth, we feel, in looking at it, that here is plenty of room to breathe in.[1]

In these wide-extending views, Crome seems to have followed the earlier of the Dutch masters rather than Hobbema and Ruysdael, who were his teachers in the painting of those wooded glades and pleasant avenues with which his name, as well as theirs, is mostly associated. In his treatment of undulating open country, however, he comes nearer Wynants, perhaps, than to any-one else, for he is less topographical than De Koningh, a master who, although at times approaching Rembrandt in his skilful rendering of distance, is apt to map out his country as if he were taking a survey rather than making a picture. Crome, on the other hand, generally

[1] A somewhat curious history belongs to this celebrated picture. It was bought at one time by a dealer who, with the idea of turning his purchase to better account, cut the picture in half, and sold it, or tried to sell it, as two different works; fortunately, the two halves were bought by some more intelligent person, who reunited them, but the crack can still be seen across the middle of the work.

contrives to produce a picture even out of the most commonplace and dreary materials, and herein his artistic insight is clearly seen, for it is not enough to paint merely a faithful record of what lies before the eyes. The true artist ever infuses into his work something of that which lies in his own mind, and tells us not so much how nature looked, as how he felt that she looked, otherwise a good photograph would be more valuable in its exact faithfulness than the most careful painting; for paintings in which the painter's mind is left out—and, unfortunately, there are plenty of such—are surely the most worthless of all kinds of mechanical reproductions. But Crome, though his mind was not a large one, threw it heartily into all that he did. We can picture to ourselves the genial, easy-going, commonplace-looking little man rambling along the pleasant lanes, or beside the slow Yare, or across the upland lawn, not alone, but with some attentive pupil or congenial companion, to whom he could gossip in his familiar jocular manner, while all the while he took in, without appearing to notice it, every feature of the scene, and let it mellow in his mind for future use.

He travelled a little in England and Wales at various times, as may be seen by the places represented; and once, in 1814, he extended his journeying to Paris, going by way of Belgium, where he must have found the scenery familiar, though the only record he appears to have made of it, beyond slight sketches, is his "View on the Ostend Canal at Bruges," a fine moonlight effect, that was evidently noted on the spot and afterwards reproduced. In Paris the pictures in the Louvre must, one would imagine, have been a revelation to the humble Norfolk painter. Unfortunately he kept no note-book, nor have his letters, if he wrote any, been preserved, so that we have no means of knowing what his impressions were, except by two pictures painted about this time, which show him in a somewhat new light.

These, the "Boulevard des Italiens, Paris," and the "Fish-market on the Beach at Boulogne," are painted in a lighter key of colour than in his Norfolk views, and are more sketchy in treatment, though exceedingly skilful in

their rendering of the striking features of the scene. In the "Boulevard des Italiens" the trees in the avenues are seen in early summer clothing of light and delicate green, while a gay and busy scene takes place beneath them of quite a different class to any to which the painter could have been accustomed in heavy Norfolk. On the beach at Boulogne, with the fish just come in, he must have felt more at home; but here also the colour is quite brilliant and light of key, as if he wished by this to express the difference of the atmosphere around. Both these interesting works were exhibited at Burlington House in 1878, and attracted much notice.

Crome was now in the receipt of a good income, for although, as before said, he never, even to the last obtained high prices for his pictures, he painted a great many, contributing generally eighteen to twenty different works to the Norwich Society's annual exhibition, held in Sir Benjamin Wrench's Court, an old quadrangle in Norwich, that was demolished about 1828 to make room for the new Corn Hall. It would seem that Crome at one time resided in this Court, in a house afterwards known as the "Lobster Inn;" but for some time before his death he lived in a substantial house in the parish of St. George Colegate. He sometimes took a trip up to London, and now and then sent a work to the Royal Academy;[1] but for the most part all his interests were centred in his native Norwich, where he had now become a recognized authority in matters of Art.

In 1810 he was elected President of the Norwich Society; John Sell Cotman, the second best artist of the school, being associated with him as Vice-President. Among the members were now to be reckoned such men as James Stark, George Vincent, Joseph Stannard, John Thistle, the etchers, Edmund and Richard Girling, and John Bernay Crome, all of whom accomplished good work as landscapists under Crome's influence. In 1816, however, there came a secession from this flourishing little

[1] Eleven landscapes and a painting of an interior, called "The Blacksmith's Shop," were exhibited by him at the Royal Academy between the years 1807 and 1818.

Society, and a separate exhibition at the Assembly Rooms Plain. Possibly Ladbrooke—who, although he had risen far beyond the old days when he and Crome used to share a garret and the profits of their artistic skill, had never met with the recognition that had come to Crome—felt a little jealous of his more successful brother-in-law. Crome, however, does not seem to have been much altered by circumstances. From all accounts he was always a jovial, good-tempered, easy-going companion, full of humour and loving his joke and his glass of grog, especially when in company with kindred spirits. Such he would often meet of an evening in the bar-parlour of a Norwich inn which he frequented, and where some Norwich folk still remember him holding forth with merry humour on things artistic and political. Not unlike even in his tastes to the honest *bourgeois* Dutch painters whose art he followed, many of whom, also, we may infer, notwithstanding that the charges of drunkenness and immorality brought against them by Houbraken are proved to be unfounded, did not disdain at times to "take their ease in their inn."

It was from the midst of society such as this, from a busy, jolly artist life, that Crome was called away on the 22nd of April, 1821, after a few days' illness. His last words are said to have been, "Hobbema, my dear Hobbema, how I have loved you!" But if he loved Hobbema, he loved nature still better, and learnt more from her than from any Dutchman. He was in his fifty-ninth year at the time of his death, and in the fulness of his power as an artist, some of his last works being perhaps the best he ever painted. An exhibition of his paintings was held in Norwich shortly after his death, when one hundred and eleven of his works were gathered together, including those that remained unsold in his studio. But even this exhibition, though it greatly increased his local fame, did not make him more known to the world at large, and thus it has happened that at the present day almost all his pictures have remained as cherished possessions in Norfolk homes, very few comparatively having found their way into the market.

Of late years, however, four excellent examples of his art have been added to the National Gallery, namely, the extensive view of "Mousehold Heath," before mentioned; "The Avenue at Chapel Fields in Norwich," wherein the chequered sunlight falling through the trees has a very delightful effect; "The Windmill," a pleasant country scene, painted with forcible realism and thorough understanding of light and shade; and the solemn and somewhat dreary "Slate Quarries," presented in 1878 by Mr. Fuller Maitland. Unfortunately we have not any of his Norfolk coast scenes, either in the National Gallery or at South Kensington; and these, to my mind, are some of the happiest productions of his art, especially as regards the sky, an element that always plays an important part in Crome's pictures, throwing, in many of these coast views, a weird sort of poetry over the common-place of the scene. He delights especially in masses of heavy rolling clouds, or in depicting the gathering storm with one gleam of lurid light to heighten the ominous character of sea and sky.

In his etchings—for we must regard Crome as an etcher as well as a painter—he dealt chiefly with woodland and river scenes. Nothing can, in its way, be much more perfect than Crome's rendering in etching of the little bits of picturesque beauty that he met with in his daily walks. The tumble-down cottage, the rustic bridge, the winding wood-path, the inevitable paling, the sluggish stream, the small boat, and above all the wide-spreading oak or the rows of pollard willows, these features occur again and again in Crome's works, for he was constantly passing these things, and as constantly drawing them, and because he never got tired of them neither do we. Had he felt the least degree of weariness, his work must inevitably have been stale and profitless; but he fortunately was always able to find a fresh charm in Nature, and therefore it is always present in his work. His etchings, chiefly done for his own delight, were not published until after his death, when thirty-one were collected, and a small number worked off for the benefit of his widow, under the title of "Norfolk Picturesque Scenery." Another edition, in

which some of the plates were re-bitten by Mr. Ninham and others re-touched by Mr. Edwards, appeared in 1838, with the Essay by Mr. Dawson Turner before mentioned. There is a fine collection of Crome's etchings in the British Museum,[1] most of them being represented in two, three, and sometimes in four different states.

[1] Quite lately a series of sixteen of them have been reproduced by the Autotype Company.

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER.

TURNER'S fame, unlike that of many of the artists whose lives are here recorded, has gone on steadily increasing up to the present day. Quite recently, at the sale of the late Mr. Munro of Novar, several vignette drawings by him, no larger than the palm of the hand, sold for about £400 each, while two other small drawings of Kenilworth and Coventry fetched respectively £1,265 and £1,081.

Such prices, it must be owned, are often only a matter of fashion, and afford no indication of the real appreciation felt for an artist's work, but there are not wanting other proofs that "Great England of the iron heart," as Ruskin calls her, is at last fully sensible of the genius she for a time failed to understand.

It is not at all surprising that this misunderstanding should have prevailed, for in truth it needs a long education and much patient study before the mind is capable of appreciating the magnificent language Turner employs to convey his poetical ideas. Being accustomed merely to classic convention, or else to simple transcripts of nature in landscape-painting, his daring inventions must have been very difficult to follow, and it is not much to be wondered at that most persons accused him of untruthfulness. Untruthfulness, as far as regards actual fact, is indeed one of the chief characteristics of his art. We cannot trust him to represent even the marked outline of a building or a mountain with accuracy, as was shown by his drawing of Kilchurn Castle and Ben Cruachan, given in "The Portfolio" last year, where faithful drawings of the real places were contrasted with Turner's rendering of them. But there is sometimes a higher truthfulness in art than that of simply copying the face of nature. Turner's portrait of the earth was drawn not merely as it appeared to him at

any one moment, but with a thorough knowledge of all its past history, of the earthquakes that had shaken it, the storm clouds that had passed over it—above all, of the beauty which still clung to it. He has interpreted for us this beauty in all its varying forms of mountain, cloud, wave, and tree, and has thus given us in reality a more faithful likeness than any strictly local accuracy could have accomplished. For his was the vision of the poet, which although perhaps less definite, yet often catches farther glimpses of truth and beauty than ordinary sight can attain. But this vision, it must be owned, was subject at times, and particularly in his third period, to strange aberrations. His later works are often only fitful dreams, nightmares of beauty rather than distinct images. He tried to improve upon nature instead of being content as he had formerly been with interpreting her teachings, and only proved that after all nature knew best. Even Ruskin admits that he erred in this. "He erred in colour, because, not content with discerning the brilliancy of nature, he tried to enhance that brilliancy by every species of colour accessory, until colour was killed by colour, and the blue skies and snowy mountains, which would have been lovely by themselves, were confused and vulgarized by the blue dresses and white complexions of the foreground figures. He erred in refinement, because, not content with the natural tenderness of tender things, he strove to idealize even strong things into tenderness, until his architecture became transparent, and his ground ghostly; and he erred finally and chiefly in quantity." Yes, he erred deeply, there is little doubt, both in his life and in his art. In both we are constantly perplexed by the contradictory qualities of greatness and littleness, strength and weakness, so that we find it impossible to form any certain estimate either of his character or his genius. He cannot be compared with any other painter. His genius is entirely individual. He dwelt alone during his lifetime in a world of his own creation, and in this world we may still find him, not the lonely, crabbed, miserly old man, but transfigured to the poet prince of landscape painters.

It was favourable, Mr. Hamerton thinks, for the future

development of Turner's genius, that the first impressions made upon his infant mind were those of a great ugly English city rather than of a land where his eyes would have been "saturated with beauty through every sunny day and every moonlight night." However this may be, it is certain that his lot, favourable or otherwise, was to be born in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, a locality in which he was decidedly not liable to be "saturated with beauty." His father, who appears to have been of Devonshire origin, came up to London early in life, married a young woman named Marshall, and settled as a hair-dresser and barber in this dingy little street, where his only son, Joseph Mallord William, as the boy was christened, was born on the 23rd of April, 1775. It has been asserted that his mother was of good family, but Mr. Thornbury could find no proof of this. She was a woman of ungovernable temper and fierce aspect, who finally became insane, so that the maternal influences which so often affect a man's whole career, could not, in Turner's case, have been very happy. May they not, indeed, have affected him in a larger measure than is usually supposed by producing somewhat of that irritability and moroseness of temper from which he suffered?

His father, on the contrary, seems to have been a cheerful, chatty old man, of the usual busy barber type. He was very proud of his son's taste for drawing, and never seems to have attempted, like most fathers, to bring him up to his own trade. He would talk to his customers about his boy's proficiency, and when asked what he was to be, would reply, "It's all settled, sir; William is going to be a painter." With this view, probably, he gave him what he was wont to call with some pride, "a good edycation," that is to say, he sent him in 1785, when he was ten years old, to a school at Brentford, where, in spite of his propensity for drawing cocks and hens on the wall, he would seem to have acquired some smattering of Latin, as well as the more ordinary accomplishments of reading, writing, and arithmetic. After this he was sent to the Soho Academy for a time, and then to a school at Margate, a place for which he always retained an affection, possibly from having first learnt to love the sea there. One of his

earliest drawings is a view of Margate Church, which must have been taken, one would suppose, at this time, and not, as Mr. Thornbury states, at the age of nine, before he went to school at all.

On his return from Margate, after a short apprenticeship to Mr. Hardwick, an architect, and some instruction from Mr. Thomas Malton, a perspective draughtsman, young Turner began his artistic career in London by washing-in architect's backgrounds, making copies of Paul Sandby's drawings, and "neat pale green imitations" of the works of Dayes, Girtin's obdurate master. These copies were placed in his father's shop-window for sale, being ticketed at prices varying from two to three shillings. Their occasional purchase by some of his father's customers no doubt stimulated him to perseverance; and becoming friends with Girtin, who was just about his own age, the two lads worked on bravely and happily together, colouring prints for the printsellers, and for Raphael Smith, and going in the evenings occasionally to their kind friend, Dr. Monro, "the good doctor," as Turner called him, who employed them both to make drawings for him at the payment of "half-a-crown apiece and a supper" for their evening's work. Pleasant evenings these must have been, though nothing very original or remarkable was produced at them, for Turner showed none of that wonderful precocity of talent that has so often distinguished great painters. But all this forced practice in washing-in backgrounds, colouring prints, and making tinted drawings was excellent preparation in that branch of painting in which he was afterwards to achieve such magnificent results.

Several attempts, it is true, had been made before his time to raise water-colours from the mean and subservient position they had hitherto held in English art; and Cozens and Girtin, his immediate predecessors, were men of distinct originality and considerable achievement. If Girtin had lived, indeed, he might possibly have run an equal race with Turner in bringing the water-colour process to perfection; but, as it was, both these accomplished and charming artists, delightful as their work is within its

own limits, can only be regarded as preparing the way, so to speak, for the bolder genius who was to follow them. Girtin's influence especially was strong over Turner in his early time, and he doubtless gained many useful hints from his slightly older comrade, but very soon he began to break away from all the traditions of older practice, and to invent a method for himself, introducing into water-colour drawing a daring range of colour such as no artist before his time had dreamt of. He was the first, indeed, to obtain absolute mastery over all the technic of water-colour, and may be considered almost as the creator, as well as the perfecter, of that mode of painting in modern times. Water-colour, in truth, was in many respects best adapted for the rendering of those fleeting phenomena of nature in which he took most delight. He seldom cared to paint nature in her ordinary dress or abiding mood, but loved her most when decked in royal robes, and in her fitful gleams of radiant beauty or sudden bursts of passion. The infinitesimal gradations of colour, and all the varied and delicate tints produced by these changes, he could obtain more or less successfully in water-colour by simple dilution of the pigments he used. But not content with this, he was always trying to produce the same effects in oils.

His water-colour practice before long, indeed, had a marked influence over his oil-painting, and led to an entire change in his practice, distinguished, among other things, by his use of a white ground, obtained generally by the process known as *scumbling*. It was by this means chiefly that he was enabled to reproduce with such infinite and refined gradation all those varying aspects of air, cloud, and mist, and to give that marvellous luminous effect that we note in the pictures of his middle and later period.

His first exhibited water-colour was a view of Lambeth Palace, exhibited at the Academy in the same year (1796) as his first oil picture, the small study of "Moonlight at Millbank," now in the national collection. He never seems to have relinquished one method for the other, but continued their joint practice almost till the last.

At the age of fourteen he entered as a student at the Royal Academy, but he failed to attract any notice there,

nor does he seem to have profited much by the teaching he received. Mr. Ruskin is especially severe on this point. "It taught Turner nothing," he says, "not even the one thing it might have done—the mechanical process of safe oil-painting, sure vehicles, and permanent colours. . . . But it carefully repressed his perceptions of truth, his capacities of invention, and his tendencies of choice." His "choice" was evidently not marked at this time. He painted academic figures like the rest; at one time tried to learn scientific perspective, and failed, though he was afterwards to be professor of it at the Academy; took views of gentlemen's seats, and "ugly architecture in general," and copied Sir Joshua's portraits.

What he could do in this line is well shown by his own portrait, now in the National Gallery, which represents him at the age of seventeen.

Not a handsome youth, nor poetic in his melancholy appearance, but still attractive enough, may be, to win a woman's love. Tradition, at least, asserts that he did so about this time, and that the self-concentration and distrust of his life was caused by some early disappointment that saddened his whole existence. But nothing is really known on this subject, or, indeed, on any subject connected with Turner's feelings, so deep was the reserve in which he always held all his thoughts. The romance—if romance there was—was, at all events, quickly over; and, sad to say, his friendship for Girtin also, which must have cheered his early path, was doomed to a speedy close, for Girtin, who bid fair to be a friendly rival, died in 1802.[1] Henceforth Turner seems to have lived only for his art, shunning all kindly intercourse with his fellow men, and apparently caring for nothing but amassing wealth.

In 1802, Turner, who was then only twenty-seven years

[1] Turner is reported to have said, on being shown one of Girtin's drawings in after time, "I never in all my life could make a drawing like that; I would at any time have given one of my little fingers to have made such a one." "Had Tom Girtin lived," he also said on one occasion, "I should have starved;" so great was his feeling of the superiority of his early friend, whom he always spoke of as "Poor Tom." This is all the record we have of the intimacy between them, but it tells us something, considering Turner's close nature, so little open to friendship.

of age, was made full Academician, having been an Associate already for three years. Thus it cannot be said that his genius suffered from want of recognition, for at this time Ruskin accounts him as only at the beginning of his first or student period.

His genius, indeed, was curiously slow in developing. "'Without hurry, without rest,' might have been his motto," writes Mr. Monkhouse, in an essay on Turner, published in 1870, "as he went on working day by day, almost hour by hour, hoarding up his new discoveries in his mind, and storing note-book after note-book with shorthand dottings and scratches. He knew, or nature instructed him, that if his art would be a butterfly, she must first be a grub." Accordingly he was content to work for years in pencil and grey tints only, and to make topographical drawings for engravers at the same time that he was taking in and treasuring for future use all sorts of knowledge gained from a thoughtful study of nature.

His first sketching tour was made in 1793, when he travelled through Kent and several other counties, for the proprietor of the "Copperplate Magazine." His next trip was into Wales, probably in the course of the same year, for in 1794 he exhibited the "Devil's Bridge, Cardiganshire," as well as an interior view of Tintern Abbey and three other views. In 1795 he exhibited a view in Derbyshire, and seven others, and in 1796 as many as eleven different subjects. By this time he had travelled nearly all over England and Wales, "mostly on foot, with his baggage tied up in a handkerchief and swinging on the end of his stick."

After having learnt to know and love England, Turner next went abroad. His first tour in France and Switzerland was made in 1802, and then followed others in Germany and Italy, and again later on in France and Switzerland. We all know the fruitful results of these tours, both in his painted and engraved work. In his "Liber Studiorum" especially, which remains with us unchanged, as a magnificent monument of his knowledge and skill at this date, we have perhaps the most complete expression of Turner's mind and thought that he has ever given to the world.

Other works of his taken separately may rise to a more transcendent beauty, but taken as a whole the "Liber Studiorum" is a series of poems that can scarcely be equalled even in his own magnificent volume. His artistic knowledge is here displayed in all its vast range, so that if his conscious intention was to rival Claude, as has been supposed, he certainly sought to rival as much by diversity as by imitation. Turner himself merely described the work as "an illustration of landscape composition." Its publication was begun in the January of 1807, and extended over a period of twelve years. Probably from a desire to make as much money as he could, he was his own publisher for this work, but it does not appear to have been a commercial success. It was continued, however, in spite of many quarrels with his engravers, at the rate of five prints at a time, which were stitched in an ugly blue wrapper and published at irregular intervals until 1819, when it finally stopped, apparently from want of encouragement, as only seventy-one plates had been issued, and the plan extended to a hundred. Proofs of these plates now fetch as much as £20 each, and a perfect copy of the whole work, which then sold for £17 10s., costs a small fortune.[1]

During this period of twelve years, while the "Liber Studiorum" was publishing, Turner painted some of the finest pictures of his early time. His first style, of which the "Garden of Hesperides," "Calais Pier," and the "Jason" may be taken as examples, culminated, according to Ruskin, in 1815, in which year he exhibited two pictures which are now known wherever his fame has extended.

These were the "Crossing the Brook," which may be considered as the utmost effort of his first style, in which he was always more or less influenced by Girtin, Cozens, and Claude; and the "Dido building Carthage," which

[1] The complete series is now being reproduced in admirable facsimile by the Autotype Company. By the same process, also, we have the series of etchings which Turner himself made on the plates before the mezzotint was added. These etchings are very rare, very few impressions having been taken of the plates in this early state, so that their reproduction is a great boon to students and lovers of Turner's work.

Mr. Monkhouse calls "a prophecy of his second style, in which darkness was to give place to light, vapour to the sun, patient labour to exultant mastery, the grey morning to the golden day."

Both pictures are now in the National Gallery, the artist having refused enormous sums for them in order to leave them to the nation. The Carthage which he painted in distinct rivalry with Claude, he once declared to Chantrey should be his winding-sheet. He was always reluctant to part with his pictures, and this in particular he cherished with the greatest affection, but it is difficult to see what he meant by the stipulation with regard to its being hung between the two Claude Lorrain paintings.

Turner's position, as far as regards money, was now fully assured, and it is pleasant to find that as soon as it was so, he made his chatty old father the barber a sharer in his prosperity. The unsentimental affection of this odd saving pair is indeed one of the few amiable traits that can be found in the artist's wrongly-twisted life. "Dad never praised me for anything but saving a halfpenny," Turner once remarked, and truly the saving of halfpence seems to have been the chief aim with both father and son all their lives. Numerous are the queer stories that Mr. Thornbury tells, which illustrate this point. How the father used to come up to town in the early morning to open his son's gallery, on the top of the market carts in order to save a trifling fare; how the son was once "very near" having a friend to dinner; how he got out of paying seven and sixpence expended by someone upon his father's tomb; how he would give drawings to boatmen and innkeepers, rather than pay them ready money; and many other odd peculiarities. On the other hand his habitual miserliness was often contradicted by distinct acts of generosity; and probably through all his saving he was stimulated by the fixed purpose of leaving a noble legacy to his country.

Both in his life and in his art, Turner is indeed alike a mystery. The one so sordid and lonely, and the other so glorious and full of radiant life. Yet his art truly reflects

the mind of the man, for even in his loveliest pictures there is ever some chord of sadness, some hint of discord and death, some reminiscence of evil.

More than any other landscape painter, he gives us not nature itself, but the impressions he derived from nature, and these impressions were always affected by the unsatisfied desires of his own heart. What he missed in life it is impossible to know. Biographers talk of disappointed love, but surely that would not have been sufficient to permanently darken a mind such as his. It seems more probable that the melancholy which grew upon him in his later days was in a great measure to be attributed to hereditary tendencies, against which he had to fight hard, perhaps, during the great part of his life. Who shall tell of what hopes he had found the fallacy before he wrote that mysterious manuscript poem, "The Fallacies of Hope," lines from which he was fond of placing under his pictures, in order very likely to make their meaning still more puzzling? Some of his biographers speak of his having been hurt by the small amount of patronage he received from the aristocracy, but it is more probable that he would have been disgusted by popularity rather than pleased by it. He did not paint to be understood by everybody, and was even offended at being told that any one had penetrated his meaning. It is certain, however, that his brother artists recognized his genius from the first, as is distinctly proved by his early election to the Academy, an election which would seem to have been based rather on a prescience of future fame than on any distinction already attained: for at that time Turner had not given any great evidence of his powers. England, indeed, in spite of Mr. Ruskin's assertion to the contrary, has very little to accuse herself of in regard to her neglect of her greatest painter. He was never a prophet without honour in his own country, even during his life-time; but such public recognition as came to smaller men naturally fell not to the share of his solitary greatness, and one cannot now help a feeling of satisfaction that it was Sir Archer Shee, and not Turner, who was elected President of the Royal Academy. "Sir William Turner" would not

have sounded well in our ears, nor is it very likely that Turner desired the distinction.

Of all the glorious paintings of his second time (usually reckoned to extend from 1820 to 1835) the "Bay of Baiæ," exhibited in 1823, the magnificent "Polyphemus," the "Golden Bough," and "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"—all four happily the heritage of Englishmen—may be taken as the most representative of his genius.

The "Bay of Baiæ" is now, lovely as it still is, only a faint image of its pristine beauty; even the "Ulysses and Polyphemus" is suffering greatly from Turner's reckless disregard of the nature and stability of the colours he employed, and the numerous experiments he made with them. But there is comfort in the thought that when the glory of his colour shall remain only as a tradition, and pale ghosts of departed pictures shall look forth mournfully at a future generation from the walls of our National Gallery, our grandchildren will still be able to appreciate the master whom we have learnt to love and reverence, by means of engraving. For, strange as it may seem when we look at the brilliant colour with which he dazzles our eyes, Turner's works engrave better than those of almost any other painter. His marvellous effects of light are admirably reproduced in black and white, and often we cannot help admiring the delicate and harmonious rendering of the engraving more even than the magnificent dash of the painting, in which it must be admitted some jarring note, some painful incongruity, often destroys the harmony of the whole.

Turner's third style or period upon which he entered about the year 1845, is distinguished, according to Mr. Ruskin, by "swiftness of handling, tenderness and pensiveness of mind, exquisite harmony of colour, and perpetual reference to nature only, issuing in the rejection of precedents and idealism." To this period belong, it is true, the "Phryne going to the Bath," the "Ancient and Modern Italy," and the well-known "Témeraire;" but although these and two or three more celebrated works of this time mark perhaps the utmost reach of the master's powers, there are others in which admirers less enthusiastic than Mr. Ruskin find it

difficult to see any of the qualities he enumerates, except "swiftness of handling" and "rejection of precedent." Excess in these two qualities is, indeed, the characteristic of the latest period of his art, and during the last few years he produced several works which calm critics can only regard as the evidences of a noble mind o'erthrown.

Turner ever since 1812 had been the possessor of a house in Queen Anne Street, No. 47, where he kept his gallery of paintings; but some little time before his death he betook himself to an obscure lodging in Chelsea, near the present Cremorne pier, where he lived for a while under an assumed name, for the purpose, possibly, of hiding his decaying faculties from his friends. It was here that kind death found him at last one winter morning in December, 1851, a withered old man of seventy-six, whose life, sordid and unpoetical as its outward garb seems to us, must yet have been illumined by visions of beauty such as it has been given to no other landscape painter to behold.

He was buried by his own desire in the crypt of St. Paul's, by the side of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

His will, which was obscurely worded, gave rise to long litigation; but fortunately there was no doubt as to his intention of leaving his most cherished works as a legacy to the English nation. These still remain as a fitting monument to his memory, and another noble monument is the five volumes of Modern Painters which have interpreted Turner's genius to his countrymen.

JOHN CONSTABLE.

IF the life of a man, like that of a nation, is "happy in having no history," the life of Constable must have been peculiarly felicitous. As we read it in Leslie's pleasant biography, we are reminded somewhat of the Vicar of Wakefield's early experiences, before misfortune came to render his lot eventful. Sorrow came to Constable also in the evening of his life; but for the greater part of it, he might have said with the Vicar, "We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown." His portrait by Leslie shows him as just such a serene, amiable character as he is depicted in his biography, but it has been thought that Leslie laid on the *couleur de rose* a little too thickly; and Messrs. Redgrave affirm that in reality Constable was a little sarcastic, and had a way of saying illnatured things in a witty manner, that made their sting all the more irritating. Leslie's view was influenced no doubt by the warmth of his friendship, and this possibly may also have led him to rate the quality of Constable's art higher than most other critics; but even Ruskin, who, as is well known, is especially severe on Constable, admits that he is "thoroughly original, thoroughly honest, manly in manner and free from affectation;" moreover that he "painted English scenery fearlessly, without seeking to introduce into it any classicalities or middle age patents," so that after all we need not be much troubled about his "unteachableness," "want of veneration," and other wants that excited the displeasure of our great critic, who has stigmatized his art by the epithet "Constablesque." "Constablesque" it certainly is, in the same way as Turner's art is "Turneresque" and Ruskin's "Ruskinesque," but no more. He did not, as Ruskin would seem to imply, take out a patent for the manufacture of stormy skies and wet,

shining foliage; but was simply fond of observing the aspects of nature in showery weather, and of recording them in his works. In sneering, therefore, at his "great coat" weather—a sneer derived at second hand from Fuseli, who, according to the well-known story, used to call for his great coat and umbrella in order that he might go and see Mr. Constable's pictures—Ruskin is unfair, for he condemns that faithful observation of the effects of nature in Constable that he so loudly praises in his own particular object of adoration.

It is, of course, true that "if you want to feel the effects of a shower you can go into the fields and get wet without the help of Constable;" but it is extremely unlikely that, while undergoing the unpleasant process of getting wet, you would notice all the varied aspects of the sky as Constable has done; besides, the same might just as truly be said of every other aspect of nature recorded by a painter. We might observe it for ourselves, only very often we do not until art has interpreted it for us. Many things that we have passed by unheeded in our country walks become noteworthy and beautiful to us after we have seen them truthfully recorded by art; so, although Constable for the most part merely *records*, and does not, like the greatest landscape painters, give us a new revelation of nature, we shall be likely to find enough in his art to occupy our minds, as we shall in that of every artist who has expressed, simply and honestly, truths that he has seen for himself without the aid of the spectacles belonging to another master. This decidedly is what Constable has done. His art, as he himself said about it, "is without fal-de-lal or fiddle-de-dee;" by which he probably meant without those acquired tricks of expression by which many painters have acquired an easy popularity. It is above all genuinely English, locally English even, like the art of Crome and Gainsborough, though differing greatly in its character from theirs. "The scenes on the banks of the Stour," he declares in one of his letters, "made me a painter, and I am grateful. I had often thought of pictures of them before I ever touched a pencil;" and, again, "They have always been my delight. As long as I do paint, I shall

never cease to paint such places." Nor did he; the last picture he ever painted being really a mill in "dear, dirty old Suffolk," as he used to call his native county.

The family of Constable was originally from Yorkshire, but had settled in Suffolk two generations before John was born at East Bergholt, on the 11th of June, 1776. His father was a well-to-do miller, a man of some property, who gave his son (or rather tried to give him, for John had little desire for learning) a good education, and intended him for the Church. The love of art, however, unfitted him both for the Church and for the paternal mill, although he worked in the latter for a short time, acquiring in the neighbourhood the name of "the handsome miller," for he was a tall, good-looking fellow, well-built, and of great muscular strength. His acquaintance with mills was useful afterwards in his paintings, and it probably taught him also to watch the changes of the weather, so important to the miller, as affecting the direction of the wind.

It was evident, however, that he was destined to be a painter; so his father, after trying him for a time in the counting-house as well as the mill, at last gave way to his desire, and consented to his going to London to begin the study of art.

He entered as a student at the Royal Academy in 1799, and after much diligent work exhibited his first picture, simply called "A Landscape," in 1802. West was president at this time, and kindly encouraged him to persevere, saying once, when he was disappointed at one of his pictures being rejected, "Don't be disheartened, young man, we shall hear of you again; you must have loved nature very much before you could have painted this;" showing him at the same time how to add some brilliant touches of light, bidding him remember "that light and shadow never stand still." It was the best lesson Constable used to say that he ever had.

But although he continued earnest in his study of nature and diligent in his practice of art, Constable's pictures, which now began to appear regularly, both at the Academy and the British Gallery, failed to attract the notice of the public. His unobtrusive works were not of a class to win

popularity, and it is not surprising to find that for a long time they neither brought him fame nor profit. To the end of his life, indeed, Constable, although he would never court popularity, seems to have been a little sore that his merits were not more generally recognized. He had from the first, however, perfect confidence in his own powers. Writing in 1803, he says: "I feel now more than ever a decided conviction that I shall, some time or other, make some good pictures; pictures that shall be valuable to posterity if I do not reap the benefit of them." But it is not always easy for a painter to wait for posterity, particularly when he has to live by his art meanwhile, and Constable's difficulties in the matter were increased at this time by his having fallen in love with a young lady whose friends distinctly disapproved of her marriage with a poor and unknown painter. Miss Maria Bicknell, however, a young lady of singular good sense, remained constant through a long engagement, the tedium of which was no doubt relieved by the lovers by the wise consolatory letters that they wrote to each other, though it must be owned that this sensible correspondence, published in Leslie's "Life," in which the lady is always seen sedately prudent, and the gentleman constantly quoting copy-book maxims, is not particularly exciting to the uninterested reader.

The opposition to the marriage was not so much on the part of the parents of Miss Bicknell, as on that of her grandfather, Dr. Rhudde, the rector of East Bergholt, an old gentleman from whom she had expectations, and whom she was afraid to offend by marrying against his wishes. In the end, however, even the patience of these exemplary lovers got worn out, and chiefly it would seem at the instigation of his warm-hearted friend, the Rev. John Fisher, who came up to London to perform the ceremony, they one day went and got married in spite of friends and prudential considerations. The father, who seems always to have liked Constable, was soon reconciled, nor did the grandfather prove implacable, for at his death, which happened in 1819, three years after the marriage, he left a legacy of £4,000 to Mrs. Constable. Constable also, about the same time, inherited a like amount as his share

of the paternal property, so that the young couple were soon relieved from the fears of debt and poverty that had so long prevented their marriage.

In 1819 Constable was elected an associate of the Royal Academy, owing his election, as his friend Mr. Fisher wrote to him, "solely to his own unsupported, unpatronized merits." To the Academy this year he sent the largest and most important work he had as yet produced, a view on the Stour, which has become generally known as Constable's "White Horse," from the circumstance of there being a white horse in a barge near the foreground. It was bought by Mr. Fisher; but when lent to the winter exhibition at Burlington House in 1872, was in the possession of John Pender, Esq. In 1821, besides many smaller works, he exhibited another large picture that has likewise attained celebrity. This was "The Hay-Wain," then simply called "A Landscape, Noon;" which, when exhibited in Paris in 1824, created quite a sensation among the French landscape painters, who were struck by its wonderful freshness and truth to nature. "The next exhibition in Paris," says a friend, writing to him after a visit to that city, "will teem with your imitators;" and in truth the French have always shown themselves far more appreciative of Constable's art than his own countrymen. The "Hay-Wain" obtained for him a gold medal from Louis Philippe, and another was awarded to him in 1826, when he exhibited the painting called the "White Horse," at Lille. This latter picture was painted for his constant friend, and at one time sole purchaser, the Rev. J. Fisher, who was now archdeacon; but "The Hay-Wain," and another large landscape, were sold first into France. "Let your 'Hay-Cart' go to Paris by all means," writes Fisher, "I am too pulled down by the agricultural distress to hope to possess it. I would, I think, let it go at less than its price for the sake of the *éclat* it may give you. The stupid English public, which has no judgment of its own, will begin to think there is something in you if the French make your works national property. You have long lain under a mistake; men do not purchase pictures because they admire them, but because others covet them."

But even French admiration did not move the "stupid English public." The "Hay-Wain" did not remain in France,[1] nor did any of his works at that time pass into the French national collection, but in 1873, by the munificent gift of Mr. John Wilson, the Louvre became possessed of two of his finest landscapes; and since then, his youngest son, Mr. Lionel Constable, has presented another, so that France is now rich in examples of his art.

The National Gallery only contains two works by Constable, but both these are thoroughly characteristic, the one being the well-known "Cornfield," the most generally admired, perhaps, of all Constable's works, and the other the equally well-known "Valley Farm." There are six of his pictures also in the Sheepshanks collection at South Kensington, including a fine view of Salisbury Cathedral, painted about the same date as the "Hay-Wain," and "White Horse," and reckoned with them among his best works. "Hampstead Heath," painted in 1830, is also a charming example of his style at this time.

In 1822, Constable removed from the small house in Keppel Street, which he had taken on his marriage, and where he says "the five happiest years of my life were passed," to a larger and more commodious house in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. Here he continued to reside until his death, making occasional visits to his native scenes in Suffolk, and sometimes to his friend Fisher at Salisbury; but never straying far or long from home and the pleasant cares of home life. More often than not, he went no further for change than "Sweet Hampstead," a locality in which he took great delight, and of which he has left us many charming views. In 1826 he took a small house there in Well Walk, going backwards and forwards to his studio in Charlotte Street every day. This change he hoped would prove beneficial to his wife, who unhappily was growing more and more delicate every day. But this and all other efforts were of no avail to arrest the pulmonary disease which was slowly wearing out her

[1] It is now in the possession of Mr. Henry Vaughan, who likewise possesses a beautiful sketch of the same subject. It has been frequently exhibited in London.

life, and in November 1828, soon after the birth of a seventh child, she quietly passed away, leaving the little home at Hampstead utterly desolate.

Constable bore his loss calmly as was his wont, but felt it perhaps all the more deeply. His children, of whom he was devotedly fond, were now his sole care. Writing to Leslie about them in January 1829, he says, "You know that I have my seven children here.[1] This is a charge I pray God you may never feel as I do. Six of them are in lovely health, but I grieve to say that my darling boy John is in a sad state. In this sweet youth I see much that reminds me of his mother; but I must not trust myself on this subject; my grievous wound only slumbers;" and again in January, 1830, "It was a grievous disappointment to all of us not seeing you and Mrs. Leslie. My little girls were all in 'apple-pie order, to be seen.' My dear Maria had been practising her steps and music all day that she might appear to advantage. All my boys were in their best, and had allowed a total clearance in the drawing-room of their numerous ships, castles, books, bricks, drawings, &c.;" in almost all his letters, indeed, he has something to say about his children, and Leslie records that when his first child was a baby it was to be seen almost as often in his arms as in those of its mother or nurse. "His fondness for children," Leslie adds, "exceeded that of any man I ever knew." It is evident from these little traits that he was a man of loving and lovable nature, one to whom his friends were much attached; and who, although disappointed to some extent at his works not meeting with more general appreciation, could yet bear his want of popularity without repining. It was not until 1829, when he was fifty-three years of age, that he was elected full Academician, although the more fashionable Callcott, who began his career at about the same time, had received the honour as early as 1810, his smooth, tame works being far more admired than Constable's natural and original ones. Constable's art, in truth, will always have more value for the student,

[1] That is, back in Charlotte Street, for though continuing to rent a house at Hampstead, he now went back to his establishment in town

than for the general observer, who will be apt to be offended at its somewhat careless dash in execution, and its little attention to detail. Constable cared little about the fine workmanship of painting; with him the effect that was produced was everything, and the simpler the means by which he could produce it, the better. "He mostly," say Messrs. Redgrave, "laid in his works with the palette knife, thus obtaining great flatness and breadth of touch; and avoiding all littleness of execution and attention to mere details, he was enabled to treat the general truths of nature as to colour and chiaroscuro largely and simply. A minor beauty arising from this practice was the full purity of white or other solid pigments, or tints mixed with them, as left by the flat knife, unchanged in the slightest degree by the greyness occasioned by the texture of brush-marks."

This use of the palette knife, valuable in its way, was carried much too far by Constable, especially in his later works, as he himself owns in a letter to Leslie, in which he says, "I have laid the palette knife down, but not until I had cut my own throat with it." In many of his pictures patches of colour are spread on, which, far from having the appearance of "gems" as Leslie declares, have merely that of daubs, some of his sky effects especially having very much the appearance of a bottle of blue ink having been upset over the canvas and very imperfectly wiped up.

Yet it is as a painter of our English skies, that Constable has the greatest claim to distinction. No painter, not even Turner, ever understood the coming of a storm better than Constable. In his own description of the beautiful plate called "Spring," engraved from one of his sketches by David Lucas, he gives what he well calls the *natural history* of his skies. The passage shows close observation and knowledge. "This plate," he says, "may perhaps give some idea of one of those bright and silvery days in the spring, when at noon large garish clouds surcharged with hail or sleet sweep with their broad shadows the fields, woods, and hills; and by their depths enhance the value of the vivid greens and yellows so peculiar to the season. The *natural history*, if the

expression may be used, of the skies, which are so particularly marked in the hail squalls at this time of the year, is this: The clouds accumulate in very large masses, and from their loftiness seem to move but slowly; immediately upon these large clouds appear numerous opaque patches, which are only small clouds passing rapidly before them, and consisting of isolated portions detached probably from the larger cloud. These, floating much nearer the earth, may perhaps fall in with a stronger current of wind, which, as well as their comparative lightness, causes them to move with greater rapidity; hence they are called by wind-millers and sailors, *messengers*, and always portend bad weather. They float midway in what may be termed the lanes of the clouds; and from being so situated, are almost uniformly in shadow, receiving a reflected light only from the clear blue sky immediately above them. In passing over the bright parts of the large clouds they appear as darks; but in passing the shadowed parts, they assume a grey, a pale, or a lurid hue."

This scientific knowledge of the anatomy, as it may be called, of the clouds is practically made use of in all Constable's pictures. The difficulties of sky-painting are often avoided even by the best landscape painters by making their skies calm and cloudless; but Constable loved clouds, and painted the accumulated masses and fast scudding messengers he describes with the utmost truth of which his art was capable. But he loved these effects chiefly when they were transient, and when a blue rift in the sky let forth the brightness of the sun upon the landscape, overshadowed in part by the coming storm. For with all his delight in the wind and the rain-cloud, Constable thoroughly enjoyed sunlight; but he knew now what West had first taught him—that, under such skies as he painted, light and shade would never stand still, but would fall in flickering patches, and especially on the leaves of trees with that glitter and sparkle of white light that has been ridiculed by some critics as "Constable's snow."

Redgrave, however, who has his own experience of landscape painting to guide him, avers that when a landscape is painted *under the sun*, as Constable was in the habit of

painting his, "we shall find these white high lights, this sparkle and glitter, to be the very characteristics of sunlight." Indeed, if we observe the leaves of trees, and especially of those that are naturally smooth and glossy, on any bright sunny morning, when the dew is still upon them, or after a shower, we shall see that they have just that peculiar silvery whiteness that Constable gives to them.

This sparkle, it must be owned, Constable used a little too freely, for like most landscapists who have found one particular truth in nature, he was apt to repeat it to the exclusion of others. This irritated his critics, and even artists, it seems, failed to perceive the truth and beauty of his effects: for Chantrey, it is recorded, once seized a brush from out of the painter's hands on one of the varnishing days, and, as Constable pathetically remarked, "brushed away all his dew" with a dull coat of varnish. After his death also his silvery picture of the "Opening of Waterloo Bridge" was subjected to a similar fate by an ignorant dealer, who laid a coat of blacking all over it, to subdue its brightness to the conventional tone. Leslie tells us he had this anecdote from the man himself who did the black deed, and who was rather proud of it, assuring him "that many noblemen had considered the picture much improved by the process."

Constable's studies and water-colour drawings, some of which were lately exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery, though of extremely rapid and apparently careless execution, reveal even more strikingly than his more finished works his power of seizing a transient effect, and conveying the impression it had made upon his mind to that of others. This was especially seen in the drawings called "The Coming Storm" and "Old Sarum," in which the whole character of the scene depicted was conveyed with the slightest possible expenditure of effort. But although Constable has this power of conveying his own impression to the mind of others, I cannot agree with Leslie that there is much of what he calls "sentiment" in his works. His paintings do not affect us, like those of many landscapists, with a sense of something hidden as well as something re-

vealed. He simply paints all that he sees, nor troubles himself much about what mystery may lie beyond the radiant green of his trees and the warm grey of his skies. He tells certain truths accurately enough, but somehow he never makes

> "The earth
> And common face of nature"

speak to us "remememberable things."

> "The presence of Nature in the sky
> And on the earth, the visions of the hills
> And souls of lonely places,"

never disturbed the placid current of his thoughts, never haunted those pleasant scenes on the banks of the Stour, nor made the mill-stream sound "with measured motion like a living thing" in his ear.

Yet he was not without perception of the poetry of loneliness. He did not, like Collins, vulgarize his glades and woodlands by introducing chubby children, neat dames, and sturdy rustics into them; nor, like Callcott, paint pretty scenery to order in the most approved manner, without apparently feeling any more emotion than if he were manufacturing a table instead of a picture. Constable's work was always thoroughly spontaneous, and was thoroughly enjoyed by himself, one of the first requisites for its being enjoyed by others. He speaks of his painting of the "Lock" in one of his letters to Fisher, as being "silvery, windy, and delicious; all health, and the absence of everything stagnant," and this description may serve for very many of his works. That he appreciated the poetical, or as it may, perhaps, better be called, the *subjective* mood, in which some painters conceive landscape, is proved by his great admiration for John Cozens, whom he was wont to declare "was the greatest genius that ever touched landscape." "Cozens," he said, "was all poetry"—the poetry of pensive thought about nature; while Constable's own strength lay, not in musing, but in attentive observation.

In 1831, Constable, although a landscape painter, was at his own request made visitor at the Life Academy,

where, as we have seen, it was Etty's delight to go in rain or fine every evening. It is the duty of the visitors to pose the model that the students are to work from; and Constable, it is stated, always placed his according to some well-known figure from a great master, beginning with an Eve from Raphael, placed in a bower of greenery, of which he gives the following account in a letter to Leslie:—

"DEAR LESLIE,—I set my first figure yesterday, and it is much liked. Etty congratulates me upon it. Do, dear Leslie, come and see it. I have dressed up a bower of laurel, and I told the students they probably expected a landscape background from me. I am quite popular in the Life; at all events, I spare neither pains nor expense to become a good academician.

"My Garden of Eden cost me ten shillings, and my men were twice stopped coming from Hampstead with the green boughs by the police, who thought (as was the case) they had robbed some gentleman's grounds. The fun is, my garden at the Academy was taken for a Christmas decoration—holly and mistletoe. Wilkie called yesterday. I was unfortunately at the Academy; but he good-naturedly came in, and asked to see my children, and was delighted with my dear girl, who was teaching the lesser ones. I leave home at half-past five every evening at the latest. Come and walk down with me. It is no small undertaking to make a Paradise of the Life Academy."

Two other figures set by Constable were from Michel-angelo's "Last Judgment." His teaching was always clear and good, and six lectures on "Landscape painting," delivered in 1833, containing much original observation, show him to have been a good critic as well as painter; indeed, his criticism was so sharp, that Leslie, writing from Petworth, tells him that he is "afraid of his keen eye, because I know no fault can escape it." It is doubtful whether his influence over Leslie was altogether beneficial, however, in spite of this valuable eye for faults. Leslie, who was a younger man, was at times too much dominated by the more assertive nature of his friend; and Messrs. Redgrave are of opinion that the loose handling and sketchy execution of many of Leslie's later works were due

to Constable's influence. But Leslie himself, in his "Recollections," acknowledges what he owes to Constable with quite a burst of gratitude. "Among all the landscape painters, ancient or modern," he says, "no one carries me so entirely to nature. I can truly say that since I have known Constable's works I have never looked at a tree or the sky without being reminded of him. . . . Before I knew him, I admired as poetical styles which I now see to be mannered, conventional, or extravagant."

Constable's influence was great also over other men of his time, and has had perhaps a more lasting effect on English landscape-painting than that of either of the other two English landscapists—Gainsborough and Crome—who preceded him. Both of these learnt more or less from the Dutchmen, but Constable was wholly English and original. He never put in the "brown tree" of convention, but delighted in rich summer foliage and green grass, his foregrounds being always most carefully studied, though without the minute detail that some painters have given us. Detail in truth was not his forte. He is distinctly an impressionist, dealing with the broad simple aspects of nature rather than with her delicate minutiæ of flower and leaf. He himself tells us the qualities at which he chiefly aimed in his paintings. These were, "light—dews—breezes—bloom—and freshness;" "not one of which," he adds, "has yet been perfected on the canvas of any painter in the world." "Your mention of a solemn twilight by Gainsborough," he says to Leslie, in another place, "has awakened all my sympathy; do pray make me a sketch of it of some kind or other, if it is only a slight splash. My limited and abstracted art is to be found under every hedge and in every lane, and therefore nobody thinks it worth picking up; but I have my admirers, each of whom I consider an host." Strange to say, with all this love of unadorned and uncomposed nature, Constable very rarely painted out of doors. He made numerous studies, many of them careful works in oil, but he preferred, as most great landscape painters have, studio work to that actually done in the open fields. The glorious breezy view of "Hampstead Heath," with rain-clouds

gathering, in the South Kensington Museum, is said to be about the only one that he is known for certain to have painted on the spot.

In 1832, Constable exhibited his large picture of "Waterloo Bridge" before mentioned, which had been begun some ten years ago, and continued at intervals "with many alternations of hope and fear." The subject was not altogether congenial to his taste, and one can scarcely understand why he attempted it, except perhaps that he was tempted by the bright expanse of sky and water. It certainly was not one of his happiest efforts, as the critics —who were especially severe on its want of finish—soon let him know. He himself seems to have had some doubts about it, for he writes: "And yet, after all, the 'Waterloo' is a famous composition, and ought to give much pleasure; but it is the devil, and I am sore perplexed."

In 1833, he sent several fine landscapes to the Academy; but in 1834 ill-health prevented him from exhibiting more than three water-colour drawings, two of which were the "Old Sarum" and the "Stoke Pogis Church," lately seen at the Grosvenor Gallery. In 1835, however, he was again ready for the Academy Exhibition, with one of his best-known works, the "Valley Farm," the picture now in the National Gallery. This picture, which had the rare fortune of pleasing some of the newspaper critics of the day, who generally utterly failed to appreciate poor Constable's efforts at truth, is perhaps the only one of his pictures, with the exception of the "Cornfield," which has become popular by reproduction, yet it is by no means one of his greatest works. The farm represented was on his father's property at East Bergholt, and was generally known as "Willy Lott's House." It had been painted several times by Constable, who loved its picturesque aspect, but never, perhaps, with such charming effect as in this picture, which was bought by Mr. Vernon, who admired its daylight, and asked Constable when he saw it on his easel, whether "it was painted for any particular person?" "Yes, sir," answered Constable, "it is painted for a *very particular* person—the person for whom I have all my life painted." It was, in truth, a

somewhat rare chance for him to find any one desirous of purchasing his productions, and he was especially pleased at selling this to such a well-known collector. Although he was fortunately placed above the necessity of employing his brush for a means of livelihood, he was often hurt at the little appreciation he met with. Writing to Lucas, the engraver of his finest pictures, he tells him, somewhat dejectedly, that their publication is not likely to be successful, "for the painter himself is totally unpopular, and will be so on this side of the grave: the subject's nothing but art, and the buyers wholly ignorant of that."

If perchance he consoled himself with thinking that posterity would appreciate him more truly he was not so far wrong, for though his art is not of a kind to become popular, yet it is now highly esteemed, and his paintings and beautiful water-colour drawings fetch large prices.

Constable's health was not good during the last few years of his life, but no one suspected any serious ailment. The death of his wife was a grief from which he never quite recovered; he was often, it is said, melancholy and anxious, but his death happened quite suddenly, after half an hour's slight illness, on the 31st of March, 1837, in the sixty-first year of his age.

Such was the gentle charm of Constable's manner that even cabmen, Leslie tells us, were conciliated by it. One of this class, who was driving Leslie home after Constable's funeral, said to him, "I knew Mr. Constable, sir; and when I heard he was dead, I was as sorry as if he had been my own father—he was as nice a man as that, sir." A stronger testimony to Constable's "niceness" than even Leslie's affectionate eulogies. He seems, indeed, to have been, as his friend says of him, "a gentleman everywhere and at all times, and as much to the humblest as to the greatest people."

SIR DAVID WILKIE.

THE family of Wilkie, as its illustrious descendant tells us in an unfinished autobiography, was an old one in Mid-Lothian, and had held the small estate of Ratho-Byres for four hundred years. By the imprudence of some members of the family, this property, however, passed to a younger branch, and John Wilkie, Sir David's grandfather, held it only as its tenant and cultivator.

Allan Cunningham, in his "Life of Sir David Wilkie,"[1] tells us that "the birthplace of his fathers was dear to Wilkie's heart," and that when his fame increased he used sometimes to indulge in the dream of "buying back, if possible, the family inheritance, some fifty or sixty acres; of building a mansion where the grey old gable of Ratho-Byres stood; and of adorning it with pictures from his own pencil, recording scenes of Scottish glory." This desire was never fulfilled, but it shows us that Sir David had the true Scottish love of pedigree, and regarded his ancestors' history as his own inalienable inheritance. We find him, in the unaccomplished memoir before alluded to, regretting that he cannot "count kindred" with a certain Rev. John Wilkie of Uphall, who, when requested by the Presbytery to preach a sermon against "the heinousness of witchcraft," preached one instead against the heinousness and folly of believing in it—and this in 1720. No wonder Sir David wished to "count kindred" with this brave old Puritan, who dared, in spite of his Calvinism, to evince a rational understanding!

The Rev. David Wilkie, Sir David's father, was born at Ratho-Byres in 1738. He was brought up for the Church, but not until he had reached his thirty-second year did he obtain preferment. Even then it was only to the post of

[1] Published in 1843 in three volumes.

assistant-minister with a salary of sixteen pounds per annum. In 1773 he received a presentation to the church of Cults, whose "stipend, paid partly in kind and partly in money, amounted in 1774 to the moderate sum of 68*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.*," and for many years afterwards it fluctuated from 57*l.* up to 100*l.* On this modest income, however, the good frugal minister ventured to marry, and obtained for his wife "one of the most beautiful women in Fife," as he tells us in his simple diary, which, a few months after, alas! records her early death as "an event the most afflicting I have ever met with." This young lady was Miss Mary Campbell, aunt to the late Lord Campbell. The minister of Cults next married his cousin, Miss Peggy Wilkie, but she also was taken from him after a very short space of married life.

With such a magnificent income, however, it would have been wrong to have remained a widower, so the Rev. David Wilkie again decided on matrimony. This time his choice fell on Miss Isabella Lister, daughter of Mr. James Lister, farmer, and elder of the church of Cults. And a very wise choice this proved. The mother of Sir David Wilkie was a true, loving, self-sacrificing woman, and although very young when she married "the minister," we are told that she fulfilled all the duties of her station in a manner which *almost* satisfied the rigorous requirements of a Scotch Presbyterian congregation. Her third son, who was baptized by the name of David, after his father, was born on the 18th of November, 1785. To this loving mother the "wee sunny-haired Davie," the raw Scotch artist struggling with poverty in London, and the famous Sir David Wilkie whom king and nobles delighted to honour, alike turned for sympathy and consolation. At her knee he learnt to read, but before he learnt to read, he had found out for himself how to draw. He was, in fact, a born artist, and began to scratch figures on the floor of the manse at Cults almost as soon as he could crawl over it. Once when the "wee bairn" was asked what he was doing with a lump of chalk with which he was, as usual, marking on the ground, he replied, "making bonnie Lady Gonie;" and it was discovered, or perhaps imagined by a fond mother, that the

rough sketch really bore some resemblance to a certain Lady Balgonie, whose beauty, we may presume, had touched his youthful heart.

To his mother's gentle teaching succeeded that of the schoolmaster of Pitlessie; but in the studies which this worthy man recommended, David took but little interest, and instead of doing his sums he covered his slate, as he had done the floors and walls of the manse, with portraits of his schoolfellows; one of whom, on being asked, in after days, whether they were like, answered, "Oh, like! ah, weel, they were like!" although he was ignorant of the acquired fame of his former companion. So great indeed became his reputation for portraiture amongst his barefooted comrades, that Allan Cunningham tells us he used at last to make them pay for his performances, and exacted "a pencil, or a marble, or a pen, from all whom he did not sketch of freewill."

The schoolmaster gave the little laddie only "a gentle rebuke" for loving art more than lessons. But this state of things would not do, and Master David was sent, in 1797, to the school at Kettle, to try if Dr. Strachan could not teach him something more useful than drawing heads on slates. But Dr. Strachan's severer injunctions had no more effect than the Pitlessie schoolmaster's "gentle rebukes." The desire for drawing was inborn and irrepressible, and David's reputation for portraiture having preceded him to Kettle, he soon had as many sitters as at Pitlessie. No doubt he here claimed larger prices for his pictures, and bargained for at least three marbles in payment for a striking likeness. He did not stay long at this school; but his master remembered that he "was the most singular scholar he ever attempted to teach," and, "although quiet and demure, had an ear and an eye for all the idle mischief that was in hand." Here and at Pitlessie he no doubt stored up in his memory and in his sketch-book some of those irresistibly comic boys' faces which we see in so many of his works. The scenes about Cults and Pitlessie also delighted the boy's fancy, and made vivid pictures in his mind. "He loved to wander in the fields, and by the bank of the brook, gazing on the changing lines

of the sky, on the varying shades of the wood, and on the passing traveller; particularly when a soldier in "old red rags," or a gipsy wife, with her horn spoons and kettles and asses, came to diversify the road. What better education could a young artist have? He was learning—

> "The beauty and the wonder and the power,
> The shapes of things, their colours, lights and shades,
> Changes, surprises—and God made it all!"

Yes, this last truth also was writing itself indelibly on the meditative boy's soul, and bringing with it that loving sympathy with the meanest of God's creations, which we trace so distinctly in his works. Many of his early sketches were landscapes; but these do not appear to have had the same power or originality as his figure drawings. The good minister of Cults, we are told, was "not a little troubled" when he saw that his son's heart was set on painting. His grandfather tried hard to persuade him to give up what he, very likely, considered an ungodly profession, and the good people to whom his father preached "did not fail to marvel at the will-o'-the-wisp choice which the son of their minister had made."

His father, however, soon gave in to his son's steadfast desire to become a painter, or he was, perhaps, talked over to agree to it by his wife, and a painter it was resolved that young David should become. As soon as the minister had agreed to this, he determined to do all in his power to further his son's progress in the profession he had chosen, and accordingly in 1799, when David was only fourteen years of age, he sent him up to Edinburgh to seek admission into the Trustees' Academy.

Proud enough, no doubt, was the boy painter as he marched into Edinburgh with an introductory letter from the Earl of Leven to Mr. George Thomson, secretary to the Academy, in his pocket. Proud and happy at this prospect of adopting painting as a profession, but very shy, and painfully cast down, when Mr. George Thomson, after examining his drawings, decided that they were not of sufficient merit to entitle him to be admitted into the Institution. But the Earl of Leven interfered, and through

his influence David Wilkie was at last allowed to share the not very large advantages which this school of art then afforded.

"Let the young artist beware of choice," says Ruskin, and hitherto Wilkie, without having heard the dictum, had sufficiently obeyed it. He had drawn everything that came before him, "bonnie ladies," bare-footed urchins, beggars, soldiers, gipsies, father and mother, brother and sister, and pots and pans; innumerable and unclassable were the objects which covered the nursery walls of the manse, but he had never yet drawn from the antique. This was first set before him at the Edinburgh Academy. At first his success in it does not appear to have been very great, for on his father's showing a drawing of a foot which his son had copied from some classic model to one of the elders of his church, the good man asked "what it was," and on being told, exclaimed, "A foot! a foot! it's mair like a fluke (*i.e.* a flounder) than a foot." We may hope, however, that the godly elder's prejudice against the young lad's "will-o'-the-wisp" profession somewhat influenced his criticism, for John Burnet, who afterwards engraved Wilkie's paintings with such appreciative excellence, was a fellow-pupil with him at this Academy, and he says: "Though behind in skill, Wilkie surpassed, and that from the first, all his companions in comprehending the character of whatever he was set to draw. It was not enough for him to say, 'draw that antique foot, or draw this antique hand;' no, he required to know to what statue the foot or the hand belonged, what was the action and what the sentiment."

Wilkie made considerable progress at Edinburgh, and gained several small prizes, although the subjects selected for competition by the Academy were not such as to call forth his peculiar genius. A sketch of "Calisto in the Bath of Diana," however, gained him a ten-guinea premium,[1] although he was unsuccessful in what might be imagined a more congenial subject, namely, a scene from Macbeth. The particular scene to be represented

[1] This sketch was afterwards sold for £48 6*s*.

being left to the choice of the competitors, Wilkie selected that where Lady Macduff defends her son from the murderers; but, as before said, he failed in obtaining the prize for this, although the head of young Macduff in his drawing was much praised.

Whilst in Edinburgh he occupied a small room up two pair of stairs in Nicholson Street. Here, when the two Academy hours were over, to which he was "as punctual as time," he might generally be found with the Bible and the Gentle Shepherd on a table before him, a few sketches on the walls, and his favourite fiddle by his side, to refresh himself with when he got weary of painting, or to put his live models into a good humour when inclined to rebel at too long a sitting. His music indeed had such "charms to soothe the savage breast," that once it is related when he offered an old beggar man, to whom he had been playing, a few pence over and above the tune, the old fellow refused them, saying, "Hout! put up your pennies, man; I was e'en as glad o' the spring as ye were!" Would not this make a capital subject for a picture—Sir David Wilkie playing to the beggar-man! The quiet meditative student, whose musings his companions in vain tried to disturb by their jokes at his expense, but who yet liked a "spring" as well as any of them, and the jolly old beggar, the hearts of both warmed by the music of some favourite national air.

Wilkie left Edinburgh in the year 1804, having learnt as much as its Academy could well teach him. He now returned to Cults, set up his easel in the manse, and began to meditate a picture. I say, set up his easel, but this must be understood entirely in a figurative sense, for David Wilkie at this time did not possess such an article. He, however, found an efficient substitute for one in an old chest of drawers which stood in his room. Pulling out the centre drawer, he rested the bottom of the frame, on which his canvas was stretched, on that, whilst the top of the frame leant against the upper part of the chest. An admirable easel, as he himself declared; one on which, at all events, he painted the picture known as "Pitlessie Fair," a picture which, for variety of incident and accurate

representation of individual character, is considered as only inferior to some of his greatest works. In it he has depicted most of the worthies of his native village. The trouble he had in obtaining the portraits of some of them is very amusing. One Sunday, he saw one of the characters he wanted for his picture nodding in his seat in the kirk. Here was an opportunity not to be lost; and the features of the unconscious slumberer were forthwith transferred to a blank page in the Bible; and he afterwards obtained others in a like manner. Such "unseemly conduct" greatly shocked his father's godly congregation; but when some of its members expostulated with him concerning it, he had the neatest possible justification ready for them; he said that "any one who practised portrait-painting knew that the ear was not engaged in the work, for, being a business of the eye and hand alone, he could draw as well as listen." Truly David was "an ingenious youth," as the Fife folk called him.

During the summer of 1804, which Wilkie passed at the manse, he appears to have painted numerous portraits as well as his great picture, the largest he had as yet attempted, of "Pitlessie Fair." He was now eighteen years of age, and it was highly desirable, no doubt, that he should make some money. Portraiture was decidedly the best means to this end. I do not find that Wilkie in any way despised this branch of his art, nor considered it, as so many young painters are apt to do, as unworthy of his genius. On the contrary, almost all the faces in his pictures were good portraits; but his portraits, it is said, had an air of having stepped out of one of his pictures, and looked as if they played a part in an unrepresented scene. These portraits, let us hope, were more remunerative to the artist than those made at Pitlessie and Kettle schools; but it is doubtful whether he got proportionally more than in his pen and pencil payment days. But remunerative or unremunerative, the sitters of Cults and its neighbourhood were soon exhausted, and David Wilkie was obliged to seek a wider field for his labours.

He seems at first to have tried his fortune in other parts of Scotland. At Aberdeen he found a few sitters,

but could obtain neither colours, nor brushes, nor canvas, so little was art in request in that learned city. Scotland, indeed, at this time seems to have been either too poor or too cold to foster the genius of her sons, and David Wilkie, like most of her other distinguished men, soon resolved to quit her chilling bosom, and seek a warmer welcome in the south. He accordingly sold "Pitlessie Fair" for £25 to Mr. Kinnear of Kinloch; and with this money in his pocket, with the consent of his father and mother, who, although they grieved to lose their boy, and doubted the wisdom of his great undertaking, yet would not hinder it; with high hope in his heart, and with prayers and blessings accompanying him on his way, David Wilkie sailed for London on the 20th of May, 1805, being then nineteen years and six months old.

How many a young warrior has gone forth arrayed in like shining armour, but has returned, ere evening, with his breastplate tarnished, his helmet battered, and the bright sword of genius with which he thought to cut his way through the crowd, all notched and stained with unworthy uses; or perhaps, bitterest of all, the supposed keen sword has proved to be only a sham wooden weapon, and has failed to cut through even a mutton-bone! But this was not to be the case with David Wilkie.

"There is a raw, tall, pale, queer Scotchman come, an odd fellow, but there is something in him; he is called Wilkie;" wrote Jackson, a pupil at the Royal Academy, to Haydon, who had just begun his career. Haydon, as seen in his autobiography, from which many of the following anecdotes of Wilkie are taken, forms a powerful contrast to the modest simple-minded Wilkie, who considered his own success "jest wonderful." Haydon's jealousy of the "raw queer Scotchman" began even before he had seen him. He records his thought on the receipt of Jackson's letter as having been, "Hang the fellow! I hope, with his 'something,' he is not going to be a historical painter;" and he was "made uneasy all night by hearing that Fuseli had said, 'dere's someting in de fellow.'" But Wilkie soon proved that he was not going to interfere with Haydon's line of art. There was, indeed, no room

for two Haydons in the world; and this trio of Academy students, Jackson, Haydon, and Wilkie, soon became intimate friends.

On coming to London, Wilkie took lodgings at 8, Portland Street, Portland Road, from whence he walked twice a day to the Academy. He thus records his first experiences of London life in a letter to his brother:—

"Dear Brother,

"I am now come to like this place extremely well, for I have everything here I can wish for, and, although I live at a much greater expense than I did in Edinburgh, yet I also find that I live much better. I breakfast at home, and dine at an ordinary, a place where about a dozen gentlemen meet, at two o'clock, and have a dinner served up that only costs them thirteenpence a head, which I am sure is as cheap as any person can have such a dinner in any part of Great Britain; besides, we have the advantage of hearing all the languages of Europe talked with the greatest fluency, the place being mostly frequented by foreigners; indeed, it is a rare thing to see an Englishman, while there are Corsicans, Italians, French, Germans, Welsh, and Scotch. * * * * *

"D. W."

The contented, economical young Scotchman! The thirteenpenny ordinary, served to all nations, was not a very sumptuous repast, but what it lacked in cookery it made up, no doubt, in character and humour,—qualities which Wilkie appreciated more than gastronomical excellence. One of the constant guests at this ordinary, we are told, is represented in "The Village Politicians," and no doubt he picked up many other curiosities of character at this place. Of his academy studies he writes to a friend:—

"Dear Sir,

"I am still attending the Royal Academy, which I make a point of doing from morning till night. * * * I have got acquainted with some of the students, who seem to know a good deal of the cant of criticism, and are

very seldom disposed to allow anything merit that is not two hundred years old. I have seen a great many very fine pictures of the old school, which have given me a taste very different from that which I had when I left Edinburgh, and I am now convinced that no picture can possess real merit unless it is a just representation of nature.

"D. W."

But although Wilkie found living in London and having "everything he wished for" very pleasant, he found it also very dear. "I need not tell you to be careful of your expense," writes his father. But, be as careful as he might, he found the small sum he had brought with him from Scotland fast dwindling away, without seeing any means as yet of replacing it. He had, it is true, sold one picture which had formed part of the property he brought with him to London, and which he had prevailed on a shopkeeper to exhibit, with a few other small paintings made at Cults, in his shop window at Charing Cross. This picture, which was called "The Village Recruit," was painted soon after the "Pitlessie Fair," whilst Wilkie was living at the manse at Cults, after his return from the Scotch Academy. It was most likely accomplished on his chest-of-drawers easel, and the scene it depicts had no doubt been often witnessed by the young artist. It was indeed a too frequent one during the French wars. The love-crossed Recruit looks very dismal over the brilliant prospect the sergeants have held out to him, of having glory for his bride, and is only waiting for the cork to be drawn from a bottle, which apparently the old fellow next to him finds some difficulty in effecting, to drown his sorrows and his hopes together in one long Lethean draught. The gaping rustics listening to the soldiers' tales, and the old man by the fire, who is somewhat doubtful of their truth, even the limping dog who sniffs suspiciously at the strangers, are all characteristic and expressive of the artist's truth of observation.

Allan Cunningham repeats concerning this work a story told him by a well-known art critic, how that a wealthy friend came to him one morning, and said, "I have seen

what I think a very clever little picture, for six pounds, in a shop window at Charing Cross. It is painted by one Wilkie, but I am afraid to buy it." "Oh, buy it by all means," said the critic, "it cannot be altogether bad if you admire it: risk six pounds on your own taste." The dubious Crœsus returned to the window where he had seen the "clever little picture" (supposed to have been "The Village Recruit"), having made up his mind to venture his six pounds; but he was too late; some one, who had no connoisseur-friend to refer to, had in the meanwhile bought the picture. But six guineas would not go far in expensive London, and Wilkie's hopes of gaining money by portrait painting became very faint when he saw the great rivals who were already in the field. His health also got very weak at this time, and altogether poor Wilkie did not find the winter in London nearly so pleasant as the summer had been. He writes to his father, January, 1806:—

"I am now become quite inured to the difficulties of living in London; for I have been several times reduced within the bounds of the last half-guinea, and have been under the necessity of living upon credit."

A dreadful trial to his independent Scotch spirit! But if this was the state of things he acknowledged to his father, we may presume that the real condition of his affairs was even more dispiriting; for he always wrote home in the most cheerful manner that he could, in order not to depress his parents with his own anxieties.

But better fortune was dawning: soon he was able to pay some one to clean his boots, though at present "it saved expense" to polish them himself. He also found, no doubt, that it saved expense to be his own model; for Haydon tells us, that going one morning by appointment to breakfast with Wilkie, he found him "sitting stark naked on the side of his bed, drawing himself by help of a looking-glass." On being asked about the breakfast, he took no notice, but simply replied to the "important question" by saying, "It's jest copital practice!" Another time, also when Bannister, the actor, called, Wilkie was sitting on a low seat dressed as an old woman.

He was not the least put out at being caught, but replied to Bannister by saying: "I know you very well; but you see I can't move, lest I spoil the folds of my petticoat. I am, for the present, an old woman very much at your service."

But Fame was now fast approaching, though the Goddess of Fortune still for many years lagged most disgracefully behind. In the height of his success, after he had painted "The Rent Day" and most of the pictures by which he is best known and loved, I find that he returned his income as only £500 a-year.

The first gleam of the succeeding sunlight reached Wilkie by means of Lord Mansfield, to whom he was introduced by a distant relation named Stodart. This nobleman, on seeing a study of "The Village Politicians" in Wilkie's studio, asked what would be the price for a finished painting of the subject? Wilkie answered, fifteen guineas, to which the Earl made no answer. Wilkie, however, proceeded to paint the picture, on the chance of his Lordship's accepting it, and so successful was he in its delineation, that all who saw it were obliged to acknowledge its surpassing excellence. Jackson, who seems to have been totally free from the detracting envy which marred Haydon's friendship for Wilkie, was so delighted with his fellow-student's performance, that he begged his own kind patrons, Lord Mulgrave and Sir George Beaumont, to go and see "a young Scotchman who was second to no Dutchman that ever bore a palette on his thumb." "We must see this Scottish wonder," said Sir George, and both noblemen at once accompanied Jackson to Wilkie's lodgings, and became from henceforth his most enthusiastic admirers, and his warmest and most generous friends.

The approbation of Sir George Beaumont was indeed a reputation in itself. His judgment at this period was accepted as irreversible in all matters of art; although succeeding critics have doubted the sound taste of a man one of whose rules was that "there should be at least one brown tree in every landscape." However that may be, his criticisms of Wilkie seem to have been always appre-

ciative, just, and useful to the artist, who often adopted the suggestions of his noble-hearted friend.[1]

"Wilkie was now up in high life," writes Haydon, "and if a young man wanted to be puffed at dinners until Academicians became black in the face, Lord Mulgrave and Sir George were the men;" he then adds, with a perfectly unjustifiable sneer: "The winter of 1806 approached and Wilkie began to make a great noise. Sir George described him as 'a young man who came to London, saw a picture of Teniers, went home, and at once painted "The Village Politicians." At once! my dear Lady Mulgrave, at once!' and off all crowded to the little parlour of 8, Norton Street, to see the picture painted by the young Scotchman, who never painted a picture or saw one, until the morning when he saw the 'Teniers,' and then rushed home and produced the 'Politicians!'"

The picture was sent to the Academy. The morning after the Exhibition opened there appeared a very favourable notice of it in one of the papers. Haydon was the first of the trio of friends to see this, and immediately rushed to Wilkie's lodgings to bear him the welcome intelligence. He met Jackson on his way, who accompanied him. "We both bolted into Wilkie's room," he writes, "and I roared out, 'Wilkie, my boy, your name's in the paper!' 'Is it, re-al-ly?' said David;" and finding that it "re-al-ly" was, the three took hands and danced round the table until they were tired. On going to the Academy, they found a large crowd round the picture: there was "no getting in sideways, or edgeways." It was, in fact, *the* picture of the year. But Wilkie seems at first to have been more bewildered than delighted at his success, and when he saw the crowd, he kept on saying to his two friends, "dear, dear, it's jest wonderful!"

It will be remembered that Wilkie had asked the Earl of Mansfield fifteen guineas as the price of the completed painting of "The Village Politicians," and that his Lord-

[1] Sir George Beaumont, it is related, had by some means become the owner of Hogarth's mahl-stick. He kept it, he said, until he should find some painter worthy of possessing it, and on seeing "The Village Politicians" he immediately presented it to Wilkie.

ship had neither assented nor demurred to this price. Now, however, when the country was ringing with the young Scotchman's praises, Lord Mansfield wrote, claiming the picture as his for the sum of fifteen guineas. To this Wilkie replied that that sum had not been acceded to by his Lordship, who had desired him "to consult his friends as to the charge he ought to make," and that the most eminent artists whom he had consulted "considered thirty pounds as but a very moderate price for the picture." The Earl came forthwith to Norton Street. The interview between him and Wilkie was characteristic. The Earl reminded Wilkie that he was a youth unknown to fame when he had ordered the picture, and that he had "hazarded his reputation in art by giving him a commission which, upon his honour, he considered a settled matter at the price of fifteen guineas." "When I named that price," said Wilkie, "your Lordship only replied, 'consult your friends.' I have consulted them, and they all say, I ought not to take less than thirty guineas; but since your Lordship appeals to your honour, my memory must be in the wrong; the price therefore is fifteen guineas." The Earl, however, as soon as he had gained his point, gave Wilkie a cheque for £31 10*s*., with which he appears to have been quite satisfied, although he had had much higher offers made him.

He writes at this time to his brother Thomas:—

"Dear Brother,

"When I first came to London, I had scarcely a friend: the five recommendations I had were of little or no use. I have now in one twelvemonth, without interest or solicitation, gained more friends and more employment than all the recommendations in the world could have got me. The picture I have now in the Exhibition was painted from the poem of 'Will and Jean,' when they meet in the alehouse. It was done for the Earl of Mansfield; but I am sorry to say we had a great deal of cavilling about the price; and his Lordship, for the sake of getting it a few guineas cheaper, has done himself more injury than he has done me. "D. W."

In spite of Haydon's assertion to the contrary, Wilkie does not appear to have been much uplifted by his sudden success. "He was silent," Allan Cunningham says, "amid all the praises showered upon him by the press and by the people; and his only return for flattery, of which few were sparing, was a faint smile and a customary shake of the head." He may certainly have indulged in the unaccustomed luxury of a new coat, which, probably, is the meaning of Haydon's statement that he "dressed like a dandy, but in vain tried to look one;" but as the same friend had just before held up to ridicule the comical appearance of Wilkie in a coat he had lent him, in order that he might make a respectable appearance at Barry's funeral, we cannot accuse the poor fellow of reckless extravagance on this account, particularly as his first care on obtaining a little money was to discharge a small debt to Lord Crawford which his father had incurred on his behalf.

That his simple, kind heart was not spoilt by the adulation he received is, I think, sufficiently proved by the following anecdote. It is so characteristic of the man, and is related so graphically by Haydon, that I cannot help giving it entire and in his own words:—

"Now that he was richer than he had been for some time," says Haydon,[1] "his first thoughts were turned towards his mother and sister. Something of vast importance was brewing, we could not imagine what. I feared a large picture before I was ready. But at last I, as his particular friend, received an invitation to tea, and after one of our usual discussions on art, he took me into another room, and there, spread out in glittering triumph, were two new bonnets, two new shawls, ribbons and satins, and heaven knows what, to astonish the natives of Cults, and to enable Wilkie's venerable father, like the Vicar of Wakefield, to preach a sermon on the vanity of women, whilst his wife and daughter were shining in the splendour of fashion from the dressmakers at the west end of London. I never saw such amiable simplicity of rustic triumph as glittered in Wilkie's expressive face. I felt my attach-

[1] Haydon's Autobiography, page 45.

ment increased. I saw through his selfish exterior that there was a heart, certainly, underneath; but I am not quite sure after thirty-six years! Then came the packing, then the dangers by sea, and the dangers by land. Then the landlady and her daughter, and all her friends, were in consultation deep, and profound were the discussions how to secure 'those sweet bonnets from being crushed, and those charming ribbons from sea-water.' All the time Wilkie stood by, eager and interested beyond belief, till his conscience began to prick him, and he said to me,—'I have jest been very idle;' and so for a couple of days he set to, heart and soul, at the 'Blind Fiddler' for Sir George."

Dear, conscientious, "idle" young painter! It is clear that Sir George Beaumont's and Lord Mulgrave's patronage had not done him much harm. Both these noblemen had given Wilkie a commission for a picture on the day of their first visit to him. The subject of Sir George Beaumont's picture was, as we have seen, "The Blind Fiddler," whilst that of Lord Mulgrave's was "The Rent Day." Both these celebrated pictures were painted by Wilkie when he was two-and-twenty years of age, "The Village Politicians" having been exhibited in 1806, when he was only twenty-one. Of these well-known works I need say nothing. It would indeed be simple impertinence for me to extol pictures whose power to charm is sufficiently attested by the numerous gazers they attract. Simple descriptions of pictures are at best very dull things, and in this case are quite unnecessary, as Wilkie's works require no explanation, even to the meanest understanding. "Wilkie," says Ruskin, "becomes popular, like Scott, because he touches passions which all feel, and expresses truths which all can recognize."

"The Blind Fiddler" was exhibited in 1807. It is said that the Academicians had already grown jealous of Wilkie's fame. Whether or not this be true, it is certain that the picture was not hung in as good a position as that which "The Village Politicians" had occupied the year before. It was also observed that two brilliantly coloured paintings were hung one on each side of it, as if to throw the poor Fiddler into still deeper shade. But, if

such were the design, it certainly missed its aim. "Jupiter presented to Diana her Bow and Arrows" without any witnesses to his politeness, and "Flora unveiled by the Zephyrs" was admired by them alone, whilst "The Blind Fiddler," on the contrary, attracted large crowds of gazers.

Shortly after the exhibition opened Wilkie went on a visit to Cults. We can imagine the delight of both father and mother at seeing their boy return, with fame for his travelling companion. His success had, by this time, penetrated even into the stolid minds of the worthies of Cults and Cupar, who now, instead of censuring the "will-o'-the-wisp" profession of the minister's son, pressed eagerly to see him, and offer their congratulations, feeling proud rather than disgusted at having been represented in his "Pitlessie Fair." Human nature, it is delightful to find, is much the same in Scotch elders as in less rigid developments of our species. This visit to Scotland was afterwards characterized by Wilkie as the happiest time of his life, although during a great part of it he was laid up with fever at the manse.

In October, however, he was again back in London, and hard at work on the "Alfred in the Neatherd's Cottage,"[1]

[1] This picture was a commission from Mr. Alexander Davison, who was desirous that Wilkie should contribute to a collection of pictures he was forming of subjects from English history. The choice of the particular scene to be represented was left to Wilkie's own judgment, and he selected the well-known tradition which makes the peasant-disguised Saxon King burn the cakes committed to his care. This subject, though perhaps the least ambitious of any that he could have chosen, was still fraught with much difficulty, for it was necessary to give an elevated and historical character to it, which he felt would be "no easy matter where the symbols of greatness were wanting."

"With the old woman," writes Sir George Beaumont to him, "I am perfectly satisfied, but Alfred, the handsome and agreeable, is rather insipid—I mean only as to his countenance. What I wish to submit to your consideration is this, whether it would be amiss to infuse into his countenance surprise, with a slight mixture of indignation, at the sudden and indecorous attack of the old lady. This would relieve you from the almost impossible task which should express meekness and power at the same time."

Wilkie was "very sensible of the honour" of his historical commission, which trusted his powers in a line in which he had not hitherto used them. Whether he succeeded in it or not is a matter of opinion. The dog stealing the cake during the dispute is a natural touch.

"The Card-players," painted for the Duke of Gloucester,[1] and "The Rent Day," to which he was still adding finishing touches. He could not, indeed, afford to be long idle, for, as said before, the money he received for his productions was very small in amount. Writing to his brother John, who had gone to India, he says: "You will very naturally conclude from the accounts you have most likely heard of the fame that I have acquired, that I must be rapidly accumulating a fortune. It is, however, I am sorry to say, very far from being the case. What I have received since I commenced my career has been but barely sufficient to support me, and I do not live extravagantly either. Indeed, my present situation is the most singular that can well be imagined. I believe I do not exaggerate when I say that I have at least forty pictures bespoke, and some by the highest people in the land; yet, after all, I have seldom got anything for any picture I have yet painted."

This letter was written after his return from Scotland, and when all the pictures I have as yet mentioned had been disposed of. But the fact that his work was insufficiently paid seems to have been more Wilkie's own fault than that of his purchasers, who continually sent him double the price he had himself put on a picture. His constant and kind friend, Sir George Beaumont, often scolded him for the extremely low price which he affixed to his productions; and Lord Mulgrave, whilst sending a cheque for double the sum named for a picture, says, "I intend it as an admonition to avoid such disinterestedness for the future." It is plain from this, I think, that Wilkie had nothing of the grasping character often im-

[1] This was the first royal commission which Wilkie received, and it is pleasant to learn that his Royal Highness added a hundred pounds to the original fifty which he had agreed to pay Wilkie for the painting.

The evident uneasiness of mind of the man who is sitting with his back to the spectator is rendered in a most expressive manner. Although his countenance is not seen, one feels that he is perplexed and undecided what card to play. He has probably forgotten how many trumps are out. Even the position of his feet beneath his chair, betrays his uncomfortable state of feeling, in contradistinction to that of his firm old partner, who endures defeat without change of countenance, and plants his feet steadily on the ground.

puted to his countrymen. He is always "careful of the expense," however, but whether his carefulness ever fell to meanness, it is difficult to say. Haydon asserts that it did; but envy and jealousy so completely blinded his eyes to Wilkie's real merits, that every statement he makes with regard to him requires to be received with extreme caution. At all events, Wilkie's stinginess is not proved by the fact that during their visit to Paris he refused to pay postilions, waiters, &c., with the same recklessness as Haydon, who evidently wished to pass for a great "milord."

In September, 1808, Wilkie went on a visit to the Marquis of Lansdowne, at Southampton Castle, where he painted the portrait of the Marchioness. Henceforth his journal often contains the record of visits to the seats of various members of the aristocracy, whose "elegant hospitality," to use the correct conventional phrase, he enjoyed. But no "hospitality," I expect, was half so much enjoyed as the delightful freedom and ease of Coleorton and Dunmow, the seats of Sir George Beaumont, to one of which places Wilkie was often carried off by Sir George, when he thought that he had been painting too long, or was too weak in health to remain in London.

Haydon gives us a charming picture of the life at Coleorton, where he and Wilkie spent a delightful fortnight together in the summer of 1809. "We dined," he says, "with the Claude and Rembrandt before us, and breakfasted with the Rubens landscape, and did nothing, morning, noon, or night, but think of painting, talk of painting, dream of painting, and wake to paint again. We lingered on the stairs in going up to bed, and studied the effect of candle-light upon each other: wondered how the shadows could be best got as clear as they looked. Sometimes Sir George made Wilkie stand with the light in the proper direction, and he and I studied the colour; sometimes he held the candle himself and made Wilkie join me; at another time he would say: 'Stop where you are; come here Wilkie. Asphaltum thinly glazed over on a cool preparation I *think* would do it.'" Sir George Beaumont took great delight in all this, and he and his guests used

to compete each day which should produce the best study. Haydon one day paints the head of a horse, and has "the satisfaction," he tells us, "of demolishing their little bits of study; for the size of life, effectually done, is sure to carry off the prize." Wilkie, however, the next day produces an old woman, who "divides the laurels" with the horse. But this delightful fortnight was soon over, and Sir George was left lamenting that he must now "attend to his coal-mines," whilst the two friends—who before this visit had travelled in Devonshire together, and had made a pilgrimage to Plympton, the birthplace of Sir Joshua—returned to London.

Soon after the visit to Coleorton, Wilkie was elected Associate of the Royal Academy (Nov. 6, 1809). He was always one of the most punctual and constant of students, and long after he had attained the greatest proficiency in his art, we find him still working there as indefatigably as if he were learning its rudiments. This being the case, he was very pleased at being admitted into the ranks of the Academy, although it seems he did not like the trouble of calling on the members to ask for their votes.

On the 29th of September of this year he records in his Journal: "I this day began my picture of 'The Alehouse Door,'" since called "The Village Festival," and for the next six months its pages are almost entirely filled with accounts of the progress of this picture. In the spring of 1810, however, he was obliged to lay this great work aside for a time whilst he got ready a picture for the Academy Exhibition. This picture, "The Man with the Girl's Cap," or "The Wardrobe Ransacked," he was afterwards persuaded by some of his friends not to exhibit, they being fearful, it appears, of its not sustaining his reputation against the rivalry of Bird, whose pictures many of the Academicians, whether from want of judgment, or from jealousy of their associate's achievements, were now crying up as being far superior to Wilkie's. Haydon tells us that Wilkie took their injurious conduct so much to heart, that "from sheer mortification he sank down to the brink of the grave." Wilkie does not seem to me to have been a man to fall into "the completest despair" because

another man was for a time unjustly preferred before him. He was a modest, diffident man, always willing to listen to his friends' opinions on his pictures, and when they advised him to withdraw this one from exhibition he silently, Allan Cunningham says, and "in his own quiet way, resigned his place to the new candidate." But that this did not drive him to despair is proved by the entry in his Journal for April 9th, 1810, the day on which he withdrew his picture. It says: "Painted from 12 to 5, and went over the figure of the man searching his pocket in my picture of 'The Alehouse Door,' and made it a more suitable colour."[1]

Before the summer was over, however, whether from "sheer mortification," or from over-work (which is the more probable of the two), Wilkie fell very ill. The kindness of his friends to him at this time proves how much he was beloved. Sir George Beaumont, thinking that he may be in want of funds, writes, and in the most delicate manner possible, saying that he considers himself still in Wilkie's debt, encloses a cheque for £50; and this being refused, he next tempts him with some peculiar old port, without which, he says, "it is not in the power of man to colour well, or paint with effect." Joanna Baillie and her sister also insist upon giving up their pleasant house at Hampstead that Wilkie may occupy it and have change of air, and his kind landlady, Mrs. Coppard, nurses him with motherly care. But in spite of all his friends' attention, and his physician Dr. Baillie's skill, Wilkie's health continued for some time very deli-

[1] Although this picture gave Wilkie so much trouble to compose, it is not such a general favourite as most of his other early works. There is perhaps too large an expanse of foreground, and the figures appear too small for the size of the picture. Mr. Liston, the actor, sat for the man who is seated at the table holding up a bottle in his left hand. Hazlitt, in his "Criticisms on Art," says that "Liston's face in this flock of drunkards is a smiling failure," and Mr. Leslie considers "The Village Festival" the "most artificial of Wilkie's earlier productions, although," he adds, "the exquisite delicacy of touch which marks more or less every period of his art is here seen in the greatest perfection."

It was bought by J. Angerstein, Esq., for 800 guineas, and is now in the National Gallery.

cate. He was, however, able to send two pictures to the Exhibition of 1811, namely, "A Humorous Scene," and "Portrait of a Gamekeeper;" the latter painted while he was staying at Dunmow, after his visit to Hampstead.

In the February preceding the opening of the Exhibition of 1811, Wilkie had been elected a Royal Academician, but his weak health prevented him from exhibiting any great work this year in commemoration of his newly-acquired honours, or in proof, if any further proof were needed more than he had already given, that the young Scotchman of six-and-twenty was as worthy of rank amongst the forty as any grey-beard in the number. This fact was, however, made sufficiently apparent by an exhibition of his pictures which Wilkie opened on the 1st of May, 1812, at 87, Pall Mall. This exhibition attracted numerous visitors, and was a decided success, though it called forth the indignation of his brother R.A.'s, who never have liked separate exhibitions of their members' works. In this same year appeared Haydon's furious attack on the Academy, in which, in spite of Wilkie's repeated remonstrances, he detailed its "heartless, ungrateful, and cruel treatment" of Wilkie as well as of himself. Can it be wondered at that Wilkie was greatly annoyed at having his name associated with such unwarrantable abuse? He wrote Haydon, however, a wise and temperate letter on the subject, regretting "the mad or punishable" attack, as Fuseli had called it, evidently more for Haydon's sake than his own. "Wilkie was really wretched," Haydon writes, "as he was sincerely attached to me." He forgets that he had a minute before accused him of utter heartlessness.

On the 1st of December, 1812, the good minister of Cults died, and soon after this event it was determined that Wilkie's widowed mother and his much-loved sister Helen should come up and live with him in London. The brother's and sister's joy at this arrangement was very decided, but the good mother was for a time "perplexed." She could not easily uproot herself from her native soil, from the manse of Cults, from Pitlessie Mill, where her father, a hale old man, was still living, and where every association of her life was fixed. But her love for her

"wee Davie" finally prevailed, and in August, 1813, the dear old lady was comfortably established at 24, Phillimore Place, Kensington, with much of the old furniture of the manse around her. Concerning the removal of this furniture from Scotland David Wilkie gives most particular directions. He writes to his sister: "Of the kitchen furniture I do not know that you should bring any, except the old brass pan for making jelly, and anything else you may consider of value. There is an old Dutch press in one of the closets that my mother got from Mrs. Birrell; what state is that in? If it were not an article of great weight, might not that be brought?" He probably is looking at these household relics with the covetous eye of a painter, for he constantly introduces such things into his pictures, and an old copper saucepan, no doubt the one here alluded to, often sat for its likeness. His "pan and spoon style" had indeed been already ridiculed by critics.

But little cared David Wilkie for the sneers of critics, or the cabals of artists, when he beheld his loving mother and sister seated at his "ain fireside," or listened to their profound criticisms on the painting—"The Bagpiper"—on which he was now happily engaged; his great picture of "Blind Man's Buff," painted for the Prince Regent, having been exhibited in the preceding May. Besides "The Bagpiper," we find from his Journal that Wilkie must have painted, during this winter, "Duncan Gray," completed "The Letter of Introduction," taken portraits of himself, his brother, and sister, made several sketches, including a "Study of an Old Woman," (perhaps the one which rivalled Haydon's horse at Coleorton), began a sketch of "The Distraining for Rent," as well as a portrait of Mrs. Coppard and family.

After this winter's hard work, Wilkie, as soon as the Academy exhibition was open, to which he had sent "Duncan Gray" and "The Letter of Introduction," determined on having a holiday; and he and Haydon, whose "Solomon" had just achieved a "glorious victory," agreed to visit Paris together,—to visit Paris! the Paris of 1814, which Napoleon had just quitted for Elba! The Paris

whose streets, so recently washed with the blood of the revolution, now presented a most picturesque and bizarre appearance, as soldiers of all nations, Russians, Cossacks, Tartars, Poles, Prussians, English, rode up and down them. "It might be said," says Haydon, "that when we arrived at Paris the ashes of Napoleon's last fire were hardly cool; the last candle by which he had read was hardly extinguished; the very book he had last read was to be seen turned down where he left it." No wonder the two artists' minds were excited by these mighty associations; every corner in the street had its history, every man they met could tell some story of Napoleon's wars. Haydon's enthusiasm, as may be imagined, knew no bounds, and even the placid Wilkie was often "legitimately in raptures;" he was constantly exclaiming, "What a fool Napoleon was to lose such a country! Dear, dear!"

The excitement and fatigue of all this novelty proved too much for Wilkie, whose feeble constitution soon gave way under any unusual effort. A doctor had to be sought. A great physician was at last found playing dominoes in a café: and Haydon lugged him off to Wilkie's sick-bed. "Here ensued a scene worthy of Molière. I spoke French better than I understood it; Wilkie did neither the one nor the other. At last the doctor, in a perfect fury at our not understanding him, thundered out, 'Parlez vous Latin?' 'Oui, Monsieur.' 'Ah, ah!' and soon, in spite of our different pronunciations, we came to the point." The doctor's prescription turned out to be a bottle of lemonade, which being, at all events, harmless (which his drugs might not have been), Wilkie very soon got better, and when Haydon returned after a few hours' absence, he found him sitting up, "laughing ready to die," and trying to teach his landlady English. "Monsieur," said Madame when Haydon entered, "votre ami me moque." "Comment, Madame?" She then held up a paper on which Wilkie had written,—"Peter Piper picked a peck of pepper off a pewter plate," &c., which it appeared Wilkie was in vain endeavouring to make her pronounce. Haydon kept up the joke, and poor madame, no doubt, thought English a more barbarous language than ever.

They visit the Louvre. "I flew up three steps at a time," says Haydon, "springing with fury at each remembrance of a fine picture. When I got to the top, there was Wilkie with the coolest deliberation trotting up at his usual pace. I rated him for his want of feeling; I might just as well have scolded the column. I soon left him at some Jan Steen, while I never stopped until I stood before 'The Transfiguration.'"

They witness the celebration of the *Fête Dieu*, the first Sunday on which the shops of Paris had been closed since the Revolution. They go to the theatre and see a French version of "Hamlet," and are hooted at for being "les Anglais!" They go everywhere, in fact, and see all that there is to be seen; Wilkie "fortified" with a French dictionary, and Haydon elevated by his superior acquaintance with the language, which he can speak but cannot comprehend. Haydon's account of this trip is indeed so vivid and interesting that I would fain quote more of it did space permit.

Wilkie's journal of the same tour is, on the contrary, very dull. It is, as is usual with him, a mere record of events, without any personality stamped upon them. This is the reason I have always chosen his friend's account of his proceedings rather than his own. We learn, in fact, much more of Wilkie from Haydon, than we do from Wilkie. The latter, as Goethe said of himself, "never thinks about thinking." He merely tells us what he is doing, and no more. His journal, indeed, may be characterized as being entirely "*objective*," whilst that of Haydon is intensely "*subjective*," telling us not only his thoughts, hopes, and mighty aspirations, but also, as we have seen, his prayers and "the secret outpourings of his soul." It is curious to note the different way in which the same event strikes the two dissimilar minds. I have already given Haydon's account of the doctor's visit. Compare it with Wilkie's: "June 3rd. Found myself so much fatigued with the walking I had had for the last three days, that I was unable to go out except to the restaurateur's. I employed myself the greater part of the day in attempting to speak French to the mistress of the

house. Finding that I had not yet recovered from my fatigue, I sent for *un médecin*, who prescribed for me a bottle of lemonade, mixed with some drug, of course, which, whether effective or not, had at least the advantage of being very well tasted." Molière could scarcely have written a scene from this description. That Wilkie had a strong perception of the humorous is shown in many of his pictures; his boyish delight in a bit of mischief has been already mentioned, nor does he yet appear to have quite lost this taste, witness the anecdote of "Peter Piper picked a peck of pepper." Many shrewd observations of his are also recorded; as his saying, when Haydon asked him his impression of the English amidst the assemblage of all nations at Paris, "Dear, dear, they jest look as if they had a balance at their bankers';" but altogether, although it may have taken something less than a "surgical operation" to get a joke into him, I do not fancy that Wilkie was very quick at understanding this species of wit.

One more picture of Wilkie in Paris from the Haydon gallery, and that shall be the last. "Notwithstanding Paris was filled with all nations of the earth, the greatest oddity in it was unquestionably David Wilkie; his horrible French, his strange, tottering, feeble, pale look, his carrying about his prints to make bargains with printsellers, his resolute determination never to leave the restaurants till he had got all his change right to a centime, his long disputes about sous and demi-sous with the *dame du comptoir*, whilst Madame tried to cheat him, and as she pressed her pretty ringed fingers on his arm without making the least impression, her 'Mais, Monsieur,' and his Scotch 'Mais, Madame,' were worthy of Molière."

David Wilkie, indeed, throughout all his life seems to have been somewhat insensible to the charms and blandishments of the fair sex. Twice he received a Valentine, each time, as he thinks, in the same handwriting; but although he duly sets down the fact in his journal, he never betrays the slightest curiosity to know who the fair sender may be, simply stating that the verses were signed Helen. Certainly, a friend of his, Mrs. Anthony Todd

Thomson, supposed at one time that he had "a decided partiality, to call it by no warmer name," for a beautiful friend of hers; but her supposition seems chiefly founded on Wilkie's having admired the young lady as she flitted by him in a ball-room, and having remarked that her "head and throat were matchless." This remark savours more of the critical artist than the adoring lover; but Mrs. Thomson thought otherwise, and advised Wilkie "to try his fortune," to which, with his customary modesty, Wilkie replied that he would not presume; but, probably, the idea of doing so had never entered his head until she put it there. It is strange, though, that with a heart capable of warm domestic attachment, as is shown by his love for his mother and sister, Wilkie should never have married. Whether he was ever "in love," no one knows. He was not a man to record such a state of feeling in his diary.

The winter of 1814-15 found Wilkie busily at work at the "Distraining for Rent." This picture had been suggested to him by one of his own paintings having been seized at his Exhibition in Pall Mall, for rent due from some former tenant, and he had to pay £32 before he could get the picture, "The Village Festival," back. "Distraining for Rent" is one of the noblest and truest of Wilkie's paintings. Its honest pathos is not acquired by any "sensational" incident, nor is it jarred by any vulgar realization. Its highest merit is that, although powerfully dramatic, it is not in the least theatrical, but is simply true to nature. "Of a picture so well known by Raimbach's fine engraving," writes Leslie in his "Handbook for Young Painters," "I need say little, and indeed I know not how to say anything of its pathos that would not fall very far short of its impression. But I cannot help noticing the admirable manner in which Wilkie has introduced one of the subordinate figures, the man employed in writing an inventory of the furniture. The consciousness of being a thoroughly unwelcome visitor is shown in every circumstance connected with this figure. He seems desirous of occupying the smallest possible space. He has seated himself on the corner of the bedstead, deposited

his hat between that and his feet. The sheriff's officer is equally good. . . . . How true to nature is the dog, too, that has taken refuge under his master's chair, and looks out from between his legs with great dissatisfaction towards the strangers whom he dares not attack. And then the two women-neighbours near the door; the one silent and affected by the scene, the other a gossip who has left her own affairs to see what is going on elsewhere. She has the key of her house in her hand." "Distraining for Rent" was bought by the British Institution for 600 guineas. Leslie says that it was suffered to lie in a dark lumber-room for many years, being only occasionally brought into the light when the Exhibition rooms were empty, the directors of the Institution being fearful that they had made a mistake in their purchase. It was painted in 1814, and exhibited in the British Institution in 1815.

In 1816 Wilkie made a tour in Holland with Raimbach the engraver. He thus describes the impression this country made upon him, in a letter to Sir George Beaumont:—

"One of the first circumstances that struck me wherever I went was what you had prepared me for, the resemblance that everything wore to the Dutch and Flemish pictures. On leaving Ostend, not only the people, the houses and trees, but whole tracts of country reminded one of the landscapes of Teniers, and on getting further into the country, this was only relieved by the pictures of Rubens, Wouvermans, and some other masters, taking his place. I thought I could trace the particular districts in Holland where Ostade, Jan Steen, Cuyp, and Rembrandt had studied, and could fancy the very spot where pictures of other masters had been painted. Indeed, nothing seemed new to me in the whole country, for I had been familiar with it all on canvas; and what one could not help wondering at was, that these old masters should have been able to draw the materials of so beautiful a variety of art, from so contracted and monotonous a country.—D. W."

In the following year he enjoyed his summer holiday in Scotland, and revisited all the scenes of his boyhood. He became acquainted with several very celebrated men

during this visit, amongst whom were Sir Walter Scott and Dr. Chalmers. Of the latter he tells rather an amusing story in one of his letters to his brother. Wilkie and Dr. Chalmers had agreed to travel together from Glasgow to Lanark, and were just setting off, when a quakeress asked leave to join them in having a post-chaise. This was accorded, and the three proceeded on their way, evidently pleased with each other's society. As they drove from Hamilton, along the Clyde, Wilkie began to look out for the scenes described in "Old Mortality." Dr. Chalmers had not read the book, and on Wilkie's endeavouring to persuade him to do so, the staid quakeress gently reminded him of what she thought his duty, saying, "Doctor, thee hast not time to read these kind of books." The world was still, at this time, uncertain as to the great author of "these kind of books;" and Wilkie, during his visit to Abbotsford, writes: "There is nothing but amusement from morning till night; and if Mr. Scott is really writing 'Rob Roy,' it must be while we are sleeping. He is either out planting trees, superintending the masons, or erecting fences the whole of the day." Sir Walter Scott, to whom Wilkie has been so often compared for his subtle delineation of character, and for the mingled humour and pathos of his scenes, was a great admirer of Wilkie's genius. His invitation to him to Abbotsford is very characteristic. After welcoming him back to his native land, and expatiating on its beauties, he says: "I hope on your return (*i.e.* from the Highlands) that you will pay me a visit. I have my hand in the mortar-tub, but I have a chamber in the wall for you, besides a most hearty welcome. I have also one or two old jockies with one foot in the grave, and know of a herd's hut or two tottering to the fall, which you will find picturesque." What artist could resist the "old jockies" and the "herd's hut"?

Whilst at Abbotsford, Wilkie paid a visit to the Ettrick Shepherd, who then lived in a small cottage on the Yarrow. Mr. Laidlaw, who accompanied Wilkie and introduced him to Hogg, did not mention that he was the painter, and Hogg, says Mr. Laidlaw, probably took him, as he had done a great poet, for a horse-couper. At last, however,

a suspicion of the fact dawned on him. "Laidlaw," he exclaimed, "this is no' the great Mr. Wilkie?" "It's just the great Mr. Wilkie," replied Laidlaw. "Mr. Wilkie," exclaimed the Shepherd, seizing him by the hand, "I cannot tell how proud I am to see you in my house, and how glad I am that you are so young a man." When Scott was told this anecdote, "The fellow!" said he, "it was the finest compliment ever paid to man."

It was during this visit to Abbotsford that Wilkie painted the well-known picture of "Sir Walter Scott and his Family" in the character of south-country peasants. This picture, when exhibited in London, was visited by George IV; and Sir Walter, in his account of the various characters represented in it, tells an amusing anecdote relating to one of these, an old shepherd called Thomas Scott, who was mightily jealous of a country neighbour who assumed airs of superiority on the strength of having seen the late king. But after this picture had been exhibited, he one day walked over to his rival's cottage, and said: "Andro, man! did ye anes sey the King?" "In troth did I, Tam," answered Andro; "sit down, and I'll tell ye a' about it. Ye sey, I was at Lonnon, in a place they ca' the Park, that is no' like a hog-fence, or like the four nooked parks in this country!" "Hout awa," said Thomas, "I have heard a' that before; I only came o'er the knowe to tell you, that if you have seen the King, the King has seen mey (me)!" "And so," adds Scott, "he returned with a jocund heart, assuring his friends 'it had done him muckle gude to settle accounts with Andro.'" Wilkie indeed must have presented many a humble individual to Royalty.

"The Penny Wedding," called first "The Scotch Wedding," for which he had collected materials whilst in Scotland, was Wilkie's next great work. It was painted for the Prince Regent in 1818, and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1819. It now hangs in one of the royal apartments at Windsor. "All the glee and modest joy of the elder poets of Scotland" are in this picture, says Allan Cunningham, "with none of their indecorum," for which omission, he hints, the Prince "hardly forgave"

Wilkie. "It is equal," writes Leslie, "to the 'Hallow E'en' of Burns, or to the inimitable description of rustic life in the 'Twa dogs.' The joyousness and activity with which the reel is going on to the music of Neil Gow—the simple feasting in the background, where the grace is not forgotten,—and the satisfaction with which the Howdie, an important personage on such occasions, and the village doctor regarded the scene, are matchless, and in a manner as far above all commonplace or vulgarity, as it is free from over-refinement. Wilkie in such subjects seemed as if he were guided by the precept of Polonius—'Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.'" "The Penny Wedding" was shortly followed by the "Reading of the Will," a subject which had been suggested to him many years before by Liston and Bannister, the actors. This latter picture is more in the style of Hogarth than any of Wilkie's other paintings. The indignant old lady, who is quitting the apartment in a fury, is indeed quite a Hogarthian subject, and the coquettish air of the young widow also is just such as that great master would have represented. Altogether this picture has more of a dramatic character than is usual with Wilkie, who more often tells a story than, like Hogarth, represents a drama. Except in this single instance, indeed, I fail to see the similarity which some critics have said exists between Hogarth and Wilkie. They seem to me to look at human nature from a totally different point of view: Hogarth beholds it in its moral blackness, and scourges its crimes with his fierce satires. He will hold no truce with the Devil, but throws his paint-box at him, as Luther had done his inkstand. But no such conflict with Apollyon was permitted to the weaker powers of David Wilkie. Humanity was visible to him in its more loving aspect, and his work was to gently reprove, teach, and sympathize; more especially was it given to him by exquisite touches of nature to make "the whole world kin."

The "Reading of the Will" was painted for the King of Bavaria, but George IV., when he saw it, admired it so much that he wished Wilkie to send a duplicate copy to the King of Bavaria, and to let him have the original. To

this arrangement, however, Wilkie could not accede, as the picture undoubtedly belonged to the King of Bavaria. A long correspondence took place on the subject between the two courts, but finally the "Reading of the Will" was sent to Munich, and Wilkie had the pleasure of hearing from the Secretary of the King of Bavaria, "Qu'il a fait un plaisir inexprimable au Roi," and that "Sa Majesté l'a fait placer dans sa chambre à coucher où tout le monde admire le beau travail de cet artiste célèbre." Wilkie does not usually paint pretty women, but the young widow in this picture has decidedly a pretty face. The hard, selfish, worldly face of the old grandmother, who stands behind with the baby, is also very expressive—she looks just the woman to have sacrificed a young daughter to a rich old man. She is now full of self-satisfaction and triumph; but let her beware, her daughter is already listening to the soft speeches of a military officer, who looks as if he could very well spend all the old man's money, and then leave its inheritor penniless and broken-hearted.

But whilst this, and several other smaller pictures were getting completed, Wilkie was at the same time working at and collecting materials for the great national picture of "The Waterloo Gazette," which the Duke of Wellington had commissioned him to paint. "At the time," says Mrs. Thomson, "that Mr. Wilkie was employed on his picture of 'The Chelsea Pensioners,' we lived on his road from Kensington to Chelsea College, and remember his frequent and toilsome walks to that low region called Jew's Row, to sketch an old projecting house, under the shadow of which some of his groups were placed. It was a fine summer, and as he returned from his almost daily visit he used generally to call and drink tea with us; and taking out of his small portfolio some bits of tinted paper, would show us his progress—a very slow progress it was. Such a small portion of the scene was visible on the paper, that I used to say to him, 'Mr. Wilkie, I fear you will never finish your picture!' His customary answer was, 'Indeed, I am awkward and slow at anything like landscape, but when that is settled, I have all the rest here!' pointing to his forehead. He spoke so meekly of his own prospects

and talents, and looked so grateful even for our encouragement, that no one would have thought that the greatest artist of even that day was seated by our tea-table."

The following entries occur in Wilkie's Journal concerning this picture and its price, which, as illustrating the strict business regularity of both Duke and painter, have a certain interest.

"May 20, 1822. Received a note from the Duke of Wellington, asking what he was indebted for the picture. This picture contains sixty figures, and took me full sixteen months' constant work, besides months of study to collect and arrange. It was ordered by the Duke in the summer of 1816, the year after the battle of Waterloo. His Grace's object was to have British soldiers regaling at Chelsea; and in justice to him, as well as to myself, it is but right to state that the introduction of the Gazette was a subsequent idea of my own to unite the interest, and give importance to the business of the picture.

"May 22nd. Sent the picture to Apsley House, with a bill of the price, which, after mature consideration, I put at £1,260, *i.e.*, twelve hundred guineas.

"May 23. Was told by Sir Willoughby Gordon that his Grace was satisfied to give twelve hundred guineas for the picture, and gave Sir W. leave to tell me so.

"May 25. At the Duke's request, waited upon him at Apsley House, when he counted out the money to me in bank notes, on receiving which I told his Grace that I considered myself handsomely treated by him throughout."

No private secretary in this instance is bidden to write and tell Wilkie that the picture has made its purchaser "un plaisir inexprimable." The stern old Duke is simply "satisfied" to pay its price, and himself counts out the bank notes for that purpose, not increasing it a single penny, we may be sure, as so many of Wilkie's noble patrons are accustomed to do.

Wilkie, it seems, had adopted a sort of time-table arrangement, by which to fix the price of his pictures. He valued his time as being worth £1,000 a year, and then proceeded to charge according to the length of time each picture had taken.

The battle of Waterloo itself made scarcely a greater stir in the land than did the "Reading the Gazette," when it appeared in the Academy Exhibition in 1822. Young and old, rich and poor, crowded to see it; soldiers hurried from drill, and pensioners hobbled on their crutches, whilst the heroes who are represented in it were often recognized and proclaimed with a shout of delight. It was, in fact, welcomed with a perfect storm of applause; and although the subject had doubtless much to do with this popularity, coming as it did whilst the excitement the great battle had caused was yet vivid in men's minds, still the real merits and marvellous composition of this picture left little room for carping critics to ply their trade.

In August, 1822, Wilkie went to Scotland to await the anticipated arrival of George IV., with the intention of embodying some scene of this Royal Visit to Scotland in a picture. Scotland, having seemingly forgotten her old Stuart sympathies at this time, was boiling over with enthusiasm at the thought of beholding "the first gentleman of Europe." He was the first Brunswick who had ever landed on her shores with peaceful intentions, and her welcome, let us hope, was given to the monarch, and not to the man. Wilkie was presented at the Edinburgh levée; he writes to his sister:—

"My dear Sister,

"As I have my court dress here, I was particularly desirous of presentation at the levée, and Sir Walter Scott recommended me to go and to make use of his name on my presentation card. . . . . On being presented to the King, my name was read from my presentation card by Lord Glenlyon, and I approached His Majesty, half kneeling on my right knee, when the King held out his hand, which I put in the usual form near to my lips, then rose and bowed to his Majesty. At first the King did not appear to recognize me, but on hearing my name he looked at me, gave a sudden smile, and said, 'How d'ye do?' Upon which I bowed very low, and passed on with the rest out of the room. "D. W."

Wilkie was a little uncertain as to what particular in-

cident of the Royal visit he should choose for his picture: the Landing of the King at the moment when he first set foot on Scottish ground, the Visit to the Castle, the King bestowing Alms in the High Church, and the Entrance into the Palace of Holyrood, all presented pictorial advantages. The third of these subjects, however, would, it appears, have been the one fixed on by Wilkie but for the very sufficient reason of its not occurring. Wilkie was duly stationed in the kirk to behold the royal "mite" dropped into the poor-box, but, says Allan Cunningham, "some officious official, imagining that a plate 'heaped up wi' ha'pence' would be offensive in the sight of majesty, or who wished to support the royal assertion that the Scotch were a nation of gentlemen, without a mendicant among them, removed the 'Poor's Plate,' so that the King, not finding a place for depositing his alms, was constrained to send, instead of giving them, to the elders, to the chagrin of Wilkie, and the national loss of a noble picture with which he had intended to celebrate the event." Or perhaps the "officious official" may have thought that the first gentleman would prefer his left hand remaining unacquainted with the doings of his right. However that may be, the unaccomplished almsgiving could not be painted, and the King, to whom the choice of the subject of a picture was finally left, decided on the Entrance to Holyrood; a picture which, we are told, gave Wilkie much trouble in limning "so many chiefs and nobles who desired to look their loftiest."

A far more congenial subject was found by Wilkie about this time in the "Parish Beadle," whom he has represented in all the full-blown dignity of bumbledom, hauling off to prison some poor Savoyards who have dared to infringe the usually dormant vagrancy laws, by exhibiting a bear and a monkey in some town or village governed by this high official. This picture, when exhibited in the Royal Academy, in 1823, had for its motto a quotation from Burn's "Justice of the Peace:" "And an officer giveth sufficient notice what he is, when he saith to the party, 'I arrest you in the king's name,' and in such case, the party at their peril ought to obey him." For force of

colour, careful execution, and knowledge of light and shade, it is one of the finest works Wilkie ever painted, though it marks the transition from his earlier to his later style. It was originally painted for Lord Colborne, who bequeathed it to the National Gallery in 1854.

It may be remarked, *àpropos* of this picture, that there is a dog, sometimes two, in almost every one of Wilkie's earlier works. These animals are not put in merely for effect, or to fill up a blank space; they generally have some part to play in the scene. The dog in "The Letter of Introduction" asks "Who are you?" as plainly and suspiciously as his master; in "The Blind Fiddler," the dog is listening to the music with quite as much interest as the rest of the company, and with even more discrimination in his looks. He evidently thinks himself quite qualified to judge between the relative merits of the "Braes o' Ballendean" and "Bonnie Lassie." In "Blind Man's Buff," he is enjoying the glee, participating in it rather to his cost, for one of the young urchins has just tumbled over him, and he is apparently getting somewhat flattened. In "The Reading of the Will" he has crouched beneath his dead master's chair, and is apparently the only one who mourns for him; and in "The Parish Beadle," he represents that wise, melancholy, and long-suffering class, who are trained to perform tricks for the amusement of their supposed superiors.

In September, 1824, Wilkie again went to Edinburgh for the purpose of collecting materials for his "John Knox." During his stay the artists of Edinburgh united to give a dinner in his honour. He writes about this dinner to his sister:—

"Edinburgh, 11th Sept., 1824.

"My dear Sister,

"We had yesterday a royal feast. The artists of Edinburgh to the number of seventeen, with Mr. Nasmyth at their head, agreed to give me a dinner at the British Hotel, at which their cordiality and kindness was displayed in an eminent degree. Young Landseer was also invited, but Newton being away, was not there. We had, of course, a great many toasts and speeches, and, as in duty

bound, I had to give them various *screeds*. Upon the whole, both in the eating and drinking, which was of the first style: and what with the various addresses, replies, and rejoinders, nothing could go off better. I do not know a circumstance more gratifying to me than this has been. "D. W."

Did David Wilkie remember his thirteenpenny ordinary when he sat down to this "royal feast?" Fife also was anxious to do honour to the genius at whom it had formerly looked askance, and how can honour be better done than by a dinner? Wilkie accordingly was invited to a banquet by the provost and other dignitaries, and, bygones being forgotten, Wilkie made a speech which the "Fife Herald" declared was "seldom equalled for natural and powerful eloquence." The enthusiasm and toasts of the dinner may perhaps have exalted the "Fife Herald's" admiration, but it is admitted, on better authority, that Wilkie's speeches were generally very good.

But whilst public honours, royal favours, and artists' welcomes were being showered upon him, trouble and sorrow and sickness were nigh at hand. Before the intended term of this visit to Scotland was over, Wilkie was summoned back to London by the news of his mother's illness, and arrived too late to see her alive. Her health had been for a long time gradually failing, and she at last passed away without even waiting to say farewell to her beloved son. Her death had most probably been hastened by the return of her elder son James from Canada with ruined prospects and shattered health. This melancholy return of his brother James, Wilkie has been known to say, "was the foremost of a series of misfortunes, which, like a train of crows, came one by one at first, then pair after pair, alighting in succession on his house, till the whole roof was darkened with them." Before the year had closed, James Wilkie had followed his mother to the grave, leaving a widow and children almost entirely dependent upon his brother David for their support. The new year, 1825, opened only to bring with it new sorrow. It had scarcely begun when Wilkie received the news of

the death of his eldest brother, John, in India, which had occurred in the preceding August, during a long march with his regiment. He also left a widow and six children. His sister Helen, a happy and expectant bride, was fated to see the man she loved die by her side on the day before that on which they were to have been united. Added to all these griefs, came severe money embarrassments, occasioned principally by the commercial rottenness of the times, but partly also by the obligations which Wilkie had entered into for his brother James, who seems to have left his affairs in the direst state of confusion.

It is not to be wondered at that, with this heavy load of misery, Wilkie's health, never strong, utterly broke down. From henceforth, indeed, his life was that of an invalid, going from place to place, consulting one physician after another, trying endless remedies,—but all in vain. In the summer of 1825, after a short stay at Cheltenham, which had done him no good, Wilkie again went to Paris; for all his physicians, though unable to arrive at the nature of his complaint, seem to have recommended change of air and scene. He arrived at Paris on the 25th of July, with a heart much heavier than when he had last visited the gay capital, and taught his landlady "Peter Piper." He must have found Paris almost as much changed as he himself was. Still less able than he was formerly to run up the steps of the Louvre *à la* Haydon, his time seems principally to have been spent within doors. Many distinguished people, however, called upon him, and the attentions paid him by men of genius during this visit "were ever remembered by him with pleasure." Besides the celebrated foreigners who offered him attentions, Wilkie had a great many English friends, who gathered round him. But neither vivacious French society, nor English friendship, nor vegetable diet, nor leeches on the feet, did any good. Not even the entertaining Talma, of whom Wilkie writes: "I have seldom been more pleased with any man than with him;" nor the constant care and watchfulness of his young cousin, David Lister, who was his doctor and companion during the greater part of his sojourn abroad, could cure his disease, and, after a month

or two spent in Paris, Wilkie turned his face and heart towards Italy, the land of invalids' hopes and artists' joys.

"After passing a most pleasant time for four weeks at Florence," David Wilkie and his friends Phillips and Hilton, both artists, set out for Rome, arriving there on the 20th Nov. 1825.

One wonders whether Wilkie said "re-al-ly!" on first beholding the Eternal City. Probably he could not resist his customary mode of address, even to the unthroned mistress of the world. Callcott used to tell an amusing story relating to Wilkie's habit of saying "re-al-ly." He said to him one day, "Wilkie, do you know that every one complains of your continual 're-al-ly'?" Wilkie mused a moment, looked up at Callcott, and drawled out, "Do they, re-al-ly?" "You must leave it off." "I will, re-al-ly." "For heaven's sake, don't keep repeating it. It annoys me." "Re-al-ly?" said Wilkie in the most provokingly simple and unconscious tone.

Wilkie's residence in Rome, if it did not bring health to his body, at all events interested and occupied his mind. His letters to his friends in England are very interesting, and, together with the opinions he records in his journal of the numerous marvels of art with which he became acquainted whilst abroad, are well worth perusal. A number of them are printed in Allan Cunningham's comprehensive biography, and some others addressed to Perry Nursey, Esq., Little Bealings, Suffolk, have recently been purchased by the Trustees of the British Museum, and were published in the "Academy" last year.[1] Although in the present day we have more critical knowledge of Michelangelo and the other great painters of whom he discourses, still a great artist's remarks on these mighty men of old cannot fail to be instructive, even if his views differ from those of more modern critics; perhaps, indeed, we may find them instructive by virtue of this very difference, for we are all too apt to accept the latest critical dogmatism for our guidance in matters of art. Phillips and

[1] See "Academy," Sept. 28, 1878, and Oct. 5, 1878.

Hilton were Wilkie's constant companions whilst visiting the art treasures of Italy; and "numerous and earnest were the friendly controversies" these three artists held on the marvels and beauties they beheld. Discussions on the "general tone of shade," or whether warm or cold colours should be used for the front groups, &c., &c. But Wilkie's time was not entirely taken up by the old masters whilst at Rome. The gaiety of the Carnival overcame the severity of the grand "St. Michael," and Wilkie, escaped from the Sistine Chapel, disported himself at a masked ball, in a black velvet Vandyke dress, with "slashes and lining of red silk," with a "handsome collar trimmed with lace," made, he confesses, for him by a lady, a splendid star of jewels on his breast, and a Turkish sash round his waist, which I am not surprised to learn, "wrought wonders." No wonder his friends did not recognize the poor Scotch painter who had lately been subjected to leeches on the feet, and who was still undergoing the most varied medical "experiments." But the Carnival was soon over, and poor Wilkie's little outburst of fun very soon subsided. A new misfortune, indeed, added itself to the already overpowering weight of woe whilst Wilkie was at Rome. This was the failure of Messrs. Hurst and Robinson, the printsellers, who owed him a large sum at the time, on which he had relied to meet his expenses whilst unable to continue work. Still, however, Wilkie never indulges in gloomy despair. "With health," he writes to his brother, "I could surmount everything; and feeling strongly, as I do, what I said to you in my last, that it is in health alone I can be either better or worse, I really must say that I am less affected by this new threatening disaster (viz. the failure of Hurst and Robinson) than with any former one by which we have been afflicted;" and again, in the same letter he says: "In all these difficulties I feel no want of resource in my own mind. With anything like returning health, I can contest the whole of them inch by inch."

From Rome Wilkie went to Naples, and was much interested in passing through the wild country where Salvator Rosa is said to have studied. In visiting Herculaneum and Pompeii, he was particularly struck by the sculp-

turesque character of the Greek paintings. "They are," he says, "little more than coloured bas-reliefs." He alludes to this peculiarity in a letter to the celebrated sculptor, Francis Chantrey. The letter is commenced in the

"Crater of Mount Vesuvius.
8th March, 1826.

"DEAR CHANTREY,

"This is an odd place to begin and date a letter from, and it is only to such an odd person as yourself such a letter can with propriety be addressed; but from Vesuvius to Herculaneum, from Herculaneum to Sculpture, and from Sculpture to Chantrey, the transitions are obvious; and in poring over the treasures of ancient art which the lava has spared and preserved to us, I have not unfrequently been led to revert to those which your chisel and hammer have in our day produced." (This is all he writes in the crater, but he finishes the letter at Rome, on the 19th, and says): "I suppose you consider Greek sculpture as preferable to all other. It seems to me as if the artists in that time began as you did, first to learn to paint, and then to work in marble."

In April, 1826, Wilkie again left Rome, and passing through Bologna, Parma, Padua, took up his abode for a short time at Venice. He expresses enthusiastic admiration for the "Correggios" at Parma, and says that the "Magdalen" in particular, "for character, colour and expression, is the perfection, not only of Correggio, but of painting." At Venice his favourite picture seems to have been the "San. Pietro Martire" of Titian. He visited it in all lights, with the sun shining on it, and in dim twilight, and says that the impression it produced was one "of awe and terror." For Tintoretto he expresses none of Mr. Ruskin's rapturous admiration; but, on the contrary, is disappointed by his "Crucifixion," and considers his "Paradise" "a huge mass of confusion." But, alas! even in Venice, the City of Enchantment, no spell cast by its beauty can make him forget the ugly reality of his affairs in London. "When I see the 'Rialto' and the 'Doge's Palace,'" he writes, "I am more apt to picture to myself the lively scenes that Shakespeare has drawn of

Antonio, with the pound of flesh and the *forfeited bond*, than to think of what these should alone suggest—the pictures of Canaletti and of Titian." The *forfeited bond* is the debt to the Ordnance, for which he was his brother's security, and which still hung like a thick black cloud over his head, a cloud which medicine was not likely to be able to disperse, although Wilkie, as a last resource, seems fondly to hope that "mercury may do it."

From Venice Wilkie travelled to Munich, where he obtained permission to see his own picture, "The Reading of the Will," which, it will be remembered, the King of Bavaria had bought. But the art-loving monarch was now dead, and his pictures, it was said, would soon be sold to the highest bidder. His private apartments, where Wilkie's picture was, were shut up and seals placed on the doors, and it was a long time, and only by great favour, that Wilkie obtained entrance. The whole scene indeed at the Palace of Munich formed at the time of Wilkie's arrival a somewhat curious commentary on the subject of his picture. He was pleased to find that it looked "remarkably in harmony" with the Dutch masters by whom it was surrounded, and that if sold with them, "looked as if it would bear as good a price."[1] With the Dresden Gallery Wilkie does not seem to have been at all delighted. "After the trim and well-arranged Gallery of Munich," he says, in a letter to Phillips, "it looks rubbishy and neglected." He admits, however, that the "Notte" of Correggio is not less "than an Archangel ruined."

Whilst at Dresden, Wilkie was induced to try another experiment in his search after health. This was to take the German waters. He accordingly visited Töplitz and Carlsbad for this purpose. But "simple hot water" has no effect whatever; and Sir James Clark, who was his physician in Rome, and whom he accidentally met again at Töplitz, decided that he should go to Italy for an-

[1] It was bought at the sale of the King of Bavaria's pictures for £1200, and placed in the Munich Gallery. Wilkie had only received £425 for it, the £25 being for its frame. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1820.

other winter. In a multitude of counsellors there may be safety, but in a multitude of doctors there certainly is not health.

At Carlsbad, Wilkie tells his sister, "Scotland is looked upon as a land of romance and poetry, and the Waverley Novels are as familiar to all classes as with us." Among Germans, Russians, and Poles, he says, "It is at once an introduction to their confidence to find that one has seen and conversed with Sir Walter Scott."

From Carlsbad to Prague, from Prague to Vienna, where he has the honour of dining with Prince Metternich "*en famille*," back to Venice, from Venice to Florence, and thence to Rome, where he is warmly welcomed back by all the artists there congregated.

On Christmas Day he partook of "a grand dinner given by young Severn at his studio to a party, all artists, eleven in number." A Scotch dish had been determined on at this dinner in honour of Wilkie, and a veritable "haggis" made its appearance, "a true chieftain in imperial Rome!" "He was soon operated upon," continues Wilkie, "and was left in a state that to an Italian eye must have looked very like as if we had dined off the bagpipe of a pifferara. Never did merry Christmas have a more happy celebration. All the party were artists, and although apparently a private dinner, it has been hinted that it was somewhat joint, that they might pay me a compliment."

But this genial Christmas dinner was only a foretaste of a greater honour of the same kind which awaited him. On the 16th of January, 1827, a public dinner was given to Wilkie by the Scotch artists and amateurs then at Rome. The Duke of Hamilton took the chair, and Sir Thomas Liston, an old friend, who happened to arrive in Rome a day or so before the dinner, was one of the guests. Many distinguished foreigners were also present, amongst whom the name of Thorwaldsen has perhaps the greatest interest. Altogether, the compliment to Wilkie was perhaps the highest that could have been paid him. Royalty had certainly said, "How d'ye do?" at a levée before now, but this was a recognition of his genius by men who were capable of understanding it. "But," says Wilkie, sadly

enough, "if this expression of national feeling be thought a triumph, which I do not think it is, yet no one need envy me,—it is the afflicted state they find me in that has called it forth; and those who know the world need not think it any piece of good fortune to be too much the object of sympathy to one's brother artists and to one's countrymen."

One more sorrow, the death of his earliest admirer and most constant friend, Sir George Beaumont, came to Wilkie whilst at Rome, and then at last the dark night in which he had so long wandered began to show signs of returning day. During the summer of 1827, which he spent at Geneva, he was sufficiently restored to health (apparently from having left off taking remedies and consulting doctors) to be able to paint a picture, that of the "Princess Doria Washing the Pilgrim's Feet," a continuous effort to which he had been hitherto unequal. This return of the power of continuous attention, the loss of which had been one of the chief symptoms of his disease, renewed his hopes; and "*accounts*" in London becoming "clearer and more satisfactory," he is now able to go on, he says, "without anxiety; enough for travelling and home expenses, and enough to go on with the engravings, all come by fairly in the way of business." No help, indeed, except "in the way of business," would Wilkie accept from any of his friends. It was, however, supposed that he would not refuse assistance extended to him either by his country or his sovereign; but I cannot find that his country was ever made aware of his wants, and the noble patron of art on the throne could think of no better mode of supporting it, than by helping Wilkie to pay his doctor's bills whilst he was ill, under an agreement that he should be repaid in pictures when he got better. This kindness Wilkie meekly refused, and by his own unaided exertions achieved independence.

But the prospect of better health and brighter times did not at once bring Wilkie back to London. The doctors had advised him to stay three years abroad, and, independently of this, he was loth to return home without having seen the triumphs of Spanish art in its native abode. To

Spain, therefore, he next turned his steps. This journey to Spain was fraught with great importance, for it confirmed Wilkie in a purpose he had long been meditating, namely, a change of style. Three or four small pictures, accomplished during the latter part of the last winter in Rome, and the "Princess Doria Washing the Pilgrim's Feet," were indeed painted in his *new style*, but this style does not seem to have been *un fait accompli* until after he had seen Titian, Velasquez, and Murillo in Spain.

We have already seen him studying Titian's magic colouring at Venice, and visiting the "S. Pietro Martire" in all lights, and I cannot help thinking that "the glorious Titian in this his last stronghold," *i.e.* in Madrid, had more effect on Wilkie's mind, and consequently on his style, than any other painter, though I am aware that the totally different mode of painting which Wilkie now adopted has been mostly attributed to the influence of Rembrandt, Correggio, and above all, Velasquez. "The spiritual Velasquez," as he calls him, he certainly admired and studied deeply, but he says emphatically, "Titian seems his model;" and it appears, judging from various remarks in his journal and letters, that he considered this the highest praise that he could bestow upon him. Ill-health had doubtless much to do with Wilkie's change of style; he could no longer afford to bestow a year's labour on one picture, nor to paint with that admirable truth of detail, which not being "sought for its own sake," but "referred always to a great end," had given such inestimable value to his earlier works; but still it does not follow that ill-health alone was the cause of the change, as Leslie seems to imagine. It seems more probable that such a modest man as Wilkie, who never thought himself an original genius, should have been led, on seeing the great colourists of the world, to perceive his own deficiency in this respect, and forgetting, as many other great men have at times done, that his strength lay in his own inherent individuality, should strive to imitate their excellences rather than discover new though lesser truths for himself.

Although posterity has failed to agree with him, Wilkie himself reckoned that the seven months and ten days which

he passed in Spain "were the best employed time of his professional life." During this period he painted four pictures, of which the most celebrated are, "The Maid of Saragossa" and "The Guerilla Council of War." "Spain," he says, "is the unpoached game-preserve of Europe, in which I have had six months' freedom to myself alone." And again: "For what I have seen I may almost be the envy of every British artist; and from what I have been doing, weak as I am, I have again the happiness to say with the great Correggio, though on a far more humble occasion, 'Anch' io sono pittore.'"

Few English artists had penetrated to Madrid at the time of Wilkie's visit; but although there was no fraternity of painters to give dinners as in Rome, Wilkie found a most charming friend and companion in Washington Irving, who was at that time an attaché of the American embassy at Madrid. After a tour in Granada, Washington Irving again met Wilkie at Seville, where, says Wilkie, "he amused us much by relating, in his agreeable way, the adventures of himself and his companions." Washington Irving's "Tour in Granada" has since been published, but it must have been much pleasanter to have heard it in "his agreeable way" whilst its adventures were still fresh in his mind. "We are much together," adds Wilkie; "we can sympathize in each other's pursuits, and discourse in the same tongue about art and literature."

Wilkie left Madrid in the middle of May, 1828, and before the end of June he was once more in London, after an absence of three years, spent in search after health, art, and, most arduous quest of all, peace of mind.

June 27, "Went to Lord Grosvenor's," writes Haydon, "where I met Wilkie, after an absence of three years. He was thinner, and seemed more nervous than ever. His keen and bushy brow looked irritable, eager, nervous, and full of genius. How interesting it was to meet him at Lord Grosvenor's, where we have all assembled these twenty years, under every variety of fortune! Poor Sir George is gone, who used to form one of the group, Wilkie, Seguier, Jackson, and I, are left. Lord Mulgrave is ill." Again, on the 22nd of July, he writes, "Had a very pleasant

two hours with Wilkie, looking over his Spanish pictures, and had one of our usual discussions about art. Now it is all Spanish and Italian art. He thinks nothing of his early and beautiful efforts—his 'Rent Day,' his 'Fiddler,' his 'Politicians.' 'They are not carried far enough;' as if anything on earth in point of expression and story was ever carried further." It is pleasant to find that the two friends are drawing near to each other again, for they had been long separated, not alone by absence, but by the wider gulf of wrong and misunderstanding. In spite of their different natures, however, they had been friends in youth, and the bond of that early love could not be easily torn asunder; and Wilkie would, no doubt, have sincerely returned Haydon's sentiments, when he said of him, "Master David, I think, I scent the old human nature. But, with all thy faults, I like thee still, and can nowhere find thy equal."

The fame that Wilkie had acquired in Spain, where his pictures had been visited by all the grandees of that nation, as well as by "every minister, secretary, or attaché" of the corps diplomatique at Madrid, had preceded him to England, and every artist and critic was on the tiptoe of expectation to see what his *new style* produced.

The exhibition of 1829 opened, and the public was gratified by the sight of eight pictures by Wilkie, the full number which a member may exhibit at one time. Four of these pictures were Italian subjects, three Spanish, and one of the portrait of the Earl of Kellie, painted for the county hall of Cupar. Two of the Italian subjects, viz. "The Pifferari" and "The Princess Doria," and two of the Spanish, "The Maid of Saragossa" and "The Spanish Posado, or Guerilla Council of War," were bought by George IV. Two other Spanish pictures, "The Guerilla taking Leave of his Confessor" and "The Guerilla's Return to his Family," were also ordered by him at this time, making in the whole a series of four pictures illustrative of the war which had recently taken place in Spain. "The Maid of Saragossa" was a general favourite with the public; but critics, having formerly abused his "pauper style," now discovered that that was his great excellence,

and a whole storm of criticism was poured on his new pictures.[1]

"Wilkie," says Allan Cunningham, "endured it all with astonishing composure: he had made up his mind in the matter, for he felt that if he continued to work in his usual laborious style of detail and finish, he would never achieve independence, nor add another sprig of laurel to his wreath."

He now took up again his picture of "The King's Entrance into Holyrood," which had been left unfinished when he went abroad. This begun in the old, he now finished in the new style, and "the mixture," says Haydon, "was like oil and water." The "John Knox," which had also occupied him before he left England, was painted entirely in the new style, and is perhaps one of the best examples of it. The subject was one after his own heart, and he threw his whole strength into it; still one cannot help wishing that it had been painted in his early time.

On the 7th of January, 1830, Sir Thomas Lawrence, President of the Royal Academy, died, and George IV. immediately appointed Wilkie to one of the offices which that polite painter had filled, namely, that of Painter in Ordinary to the King. It now became a question whether he would be elected to the other vacant office—the presidency. Most of his friends thought that he would, and the King, by appointing him his Painter in Ordinary, evidently meant to intimate to the academicians that such was his wish; but notwithstanding that he was beyond doubt the greatest painter then living, it may well be supposed that he was not a suitable man to fill the office

[1] The Spanish Joan of Arc is represented, Wilkie tells us, "on the battery in front of the convent of Santa Engratia, where her lover being slain, she stept over his body, took his place at the gun, and declared she would avenge his death. The principal person engaged in placing the gun is Don Joseph Palafox, who commanded the garrison during this memorable siege; in front of him is Father Consolaçion, an Augustine friar, who served with great ability as an engineer, and who, with a crucifix in his hand, is directing at what object the cannon should be pointed. Nigh him is seen Boggiero, a priest famed for his heroic defence, and for his cruel fate when he fell into the hands of the enemy."

George IV. gave 800 guineas for this work.

of President. His brother academicians, at all events, thought so; for Sir Martin Archer Shee had eighteen votes, whilst Wilkie had only two. Allan Cunningham says that Collins alone voted for Wilkie; but in this he is mistaken, for Leslie states, in his charming Recollections, that he also voted for him on this occasion; although, he says, he was afterwards glad that the majority did not think as he and Collins had done at the time of the election, as Sir Martin Shee "made an incomparable president." Haydon, however, was furious at Wilkie being passed over, and raved at the Academy for its jealousy and injustice in electing "the most impotent painter in the solar system," instead of the man "from whose existence an epoch in British art must be dated." Wilkie himself does not seem to have troubled much about this vexed question; we do not, indeed, find a single allusion to it in any of his letters of this time. He seems to have gone on painting under all circumstances, except when health prevented, with quite a Sir-Joshua-like composure; and, although he had no "trumpet to shift," he seems to have been equally deaf to all foolish and vexatious carpings, although, as we have seen, he was very pervious to friendly criticism.

Both William IV. and the Queen continued Wilkie in the office of Painter in Ordinary, which George IV. had bestowed upon him, and from this time forth his time was greatly taken up by court portraiture. In the exhibition of 1832 was exhibited a full-length portrait of William IV., as well as the "John Knox," which had been painted for Sir Robert Peel,[1] from whom Wilkie had received many interesting letters whilst abroad, and who welcomed him with most cordial friendship on his return home.

In the autumn of 1834 Wilkie again visited Scotland, where he undertook the commission to paint the picture of "Sir David Baird discovering the Body of Tippoo Saib." This picture was executed with an immense amount of care and thought; but although Wilkie seems to have liked the subject himself, and to have thought that it furnished "a

[1] This picture passed with the rest of Sir Robert Peel's collection to the National Gallery in 1871.

great occasion for a work of art," it has not the characteristic Wilkie stamp which endears his pictures to Englishmen.

"Columbus"[1] and "The First Ear-ring" were exhibited, with several portraits, in 1835, and "The Peep-o'-day Boy's Cabin," "The Duke of Wellington writing a Despatch on the Night before the Battle of Waterloo," and "Napoleon and the Pope in Conference at Fontainebleau," in 1836.

In order to paint "The Peep-o'-day Boy," Wilkie had made a short tour in Ireland, a country which, although it usually presented the artistic advantages of fierce glowing anarchy and picturesque dirt, had hitherto escaped the attention of painters. Wilkie was much struck by the foreign aspect of the Irish. He says: "The mass of the population has an Italian and Spanish look, and one is surprised that they should speak our own language." But what principally delighted the painter's mind was the primitive nakedness of the Irish children. "They run about the cabins," he says, "unclad, realizing to a fervid imagination an age of poetry, yet which the poetry of our own time has not described, and to painting is perfectly new and untouched." And again: "The unreserved domicile of the human species with the brute creation basking round the door with the children, who are in a state of primitive innocence, sans chemise, sans culotte,

[1] The subject of this picture was taken from a passage in Washington Irving's "Life of Columbus." A stranger, who was "travelling on foot, accompanied by a boy, stopped one day at the gate of a convent of Franciscan Friars, and asked for bread and water for his child. Friar Juan Perez de Marchena, happening to pass, was struck with the appearance of the stranger, and observing, from his air and accent, that he was a foreigner, entered into conversation with him, and soon learnt the particulars of his story:—that stranger was Columbus." The Friar was greatly interested by the conversation of Columbus, and detained him for a time as a guest in his convent. The conference which followed forms the subject of the picture. Columbus is seated at the convent table, with the Prior on his right, to whom he is explaining the chart of his proposed voyage, the physician Garcia Fernandez, who had been summoned by the Prior on account of his scientific knowledge to listen to Columbus' plans, leans over the table, whilst behind him stands Martin Alonzo Pinzon, a renowned sea-captain, who accompanied Columbus on his voyage. Diego, the young son of Columbus, stands by his side.

sans everything, classes them higher far than subjects of common life."

"*St. James's Palace*, 16th June, 1836. The king was this day pleased to confer the honour of knighthood upon David Wilkie, Esquire, Royal Academician, Principal Painter to His Majesty, &c."—"London Gazette." Yes, the "raw, queer Scotchman" is now knight and court painter. He also, like the brave young David of Israel, came up to London to fight with a gigantic Philistine, and having conquered the monster (with paint brush and palette instead of sling and stone), now enters into his kingdom. But alas! it has been a wearing battle, and it is not the brave young David, but a worn-out, feeble, old-looking man, who receives the reward. Sir David, however, is still the same modest and humble-minded man as was the young student at the Scotch Academy, who decided to work hard *because* he "was not a genius."

"He described his feelings," on the occasion of his knighthood, "like a child," says Haydon. Like a child he seems to have been pleased by the attention of great people; but this childish sort of delight at being noticed is very different from servility to rank, of which Wilkie has been sometimes accused. We do not find that he ever degraded himself by this, and Leslie affirms that "where his art was concerned he would never give up a point that he thought of consequence, in deference to the opinion or wishes of people of title."

A short time after the accession of her present Majesty, Wilkie was summoned to the court (then at Brighton) to paint "The Queen's First Council." "Having been accustomed to see the Queen from a child," Wilkie says, "my reception had a little the air of an early acquaintance." But though the girl Queen was very gracious, poor Wilkie had "considerable plague" in adjusting the claims of her council; and in the painting of his royal commission, Allan Cunningham tells us, "the artist experienced difficulties such as genius ought never to be exposed to from the far-descended and the polite."

This picture, and "The Bride at her Toilette," and several portraits, were exhibited, in 1838, in Trafalgar Square, to

which the Royal Academy had removed in 1837 from its old apartments in Somerset House. Commissions now poured in upon Wilkie far quicker than he could execute them, notwithstanding the greater rapidity of his later style. He painted a great number of portraits during these later years of his life, and I am afraid this must have been because they paid better than more complicated subjects, for they are not generally of interesting people. Two, however, must be excepted from this remark, for he painted the portraits of his friend Edward Irving, and the Irish Reformer, Daniel O'Connell.

Wilkie's reputation, indeed, was extended far beyond his own country. Ireland chose him to paint one of her patriots; Spaniards, who called him *Signior Vix* (they could never pronounce his name), delighted in his productions; Germany secured "The Reading of the Will" for £1,200, just three times the sum which the King of Bavaria had first given for it, and France, in 1835, had elected him, and Raimbach the engraver, Corresponding Members of the Institute, an honour of which he might justly be proud. Frenchmen, it appears, admired Wilkie greatly: "I like your *Vilkes*, but I don't like your *Vest*," said a Frenchman once to Leslie, and engravings from "Vilkes" pictures have, it is said, always been popular in France.

In 1837, Wilkie moved from Phillimore Place to Vicarage Place, Kensington, where, besides other painting rooms, he was soon obliged to turn the laundry into "a beau-ideal of a studio." This beau-ideal of a studio was not destined to behold much work accomplished in it. It was not finished until 1839, and then David Wilkie's working time was drawing to a close. In the autumn of 1839 he went once more, and for the last time, to Scotland, the principal object of this visit being to collect material for a picture of "John Knox administering the Sacrament at Calder House." He appears to have taken great pains to get up historical information regarding this subject, one which he would no doubt have effectively represented had he lived to paint it. His sketch for it was bought by the Scottish Academy for £84 at the sale of his works, which took place after his death.

From 1806, when he exhibited his "Village Politicians," at the age of twenty-one, until 1840, when he was fifty-five, Wilkie had been (except whilst he was abroad) an almost constant exhibitor at the Royal Academy. In 1840, he had again eight pictures on the walls of the Academy, of which number "Benvenuto Cellini and Pope Paul III." was, perhaps, the most interesting.

In the autumn of this year, in the fading evening of his life, Wilkie turned his face towards the east, the glowing morning land, where the past seems still a vivid present. More especially did he desire to visit Judea, and make at Bethlehem some sketch of a young mother and child; but whether art was his sole aim in this journey, or whether he undertook it also with the hope of gaining better health, no one seems to have known. He was not, however, Allan Cunningham states, "encumbered with royal commissions," as some people had supposed, but went entirely for his own personal gratification.

Journeying with his friend Mr. Woodburn, an experienced traveller, through Holland and Germany, and visiting all the picture galleries on the way, Wilkie, on the 1st of October, landed for about an hour at Rustchuk, whilst the Danube steamer took in coals. This, "the first town, city, or village of the Moslem Empire, exceeded in wonder all I had seen before," writes Wilkie; "but," he adds, "it was greatly the wonder of disappointment, that the domicile of the Turk should be so inferior to the splendour of his attire." Even when he arrives at Constantinople his impression remains the same. "Nothing clean or tidy, all bustle, hurry, and business; yet no appearance of wealth, all living as if from hand to mouth, with dresses splendid and dwellings wretched, still recalling, in all their doings, a race and a time from which civilization had sprung." He was detained several months at Constantinople in consequence of the war in Syria, and made a great many sketches, as well as painted a portrait of the young Sultan during his stay. Turkey offered most gorgeous attractions to an artist, but Wilkie was anxious to reach the Holy Land, and in spite of the brilliant scenes of the Moslem city, the Crescent had

no such associations as those which made him a pilgrim to Jerusalem.

Whilst he was at Constantinople the news arrived there of the fall of Acre, which, he writes, "spread like wildfire, gladdening every one, Turk, Jew, and Christian, and even exciting the young Sultan to a kind of frenzy of joy." He and Woodburn, not to be behind in the universal hilarity, gave "a royal feast" in honour of the event, and "the resounding cadences of 'The Good Old English Gentleman'" kept Wilkie awake on this occasion long after he had retired to rest in the capital of the Moslem Empire. The Sultan, when his portrait was completed, presented Wilkie with a gold snuff-box set with diamonds, and ordered a copy of the portrait (the original being intended for Queen Victoria), and then, with every mark of Moslem favour, with the regrets of the English inhabitants of Constantinople, and with the tears of his Greek landlady, Wilkie set sail, on the 12th of January, 1841, for Smyrna, on his way to Palestine.

"When Wilkie set foot on the Holy Land," says his biographer, "it was with the spiritual feelings of one familiar with his Bible from his youth, one on the eve of realizing the pilgrim's wish of a long life, and about to people the hills and vales and streams of Judea with the fine creations of his own fancy, and the rich embodiments of scriptural story." When asked by his friend Collins "if he had any guide-book with him for the journey?" he replied, "Yes, and the very best;" and produced from his travelling-box a pocket-bible. "I never saw him again," adds Collins, "but the Bible throughout Judea was, I am assured, his best and only guide-book." Throughout life might, indeed, be as truly said as throughout Judea; for although Wilkie does not, like Haydon, record his readings therein in his journal, his upright character and earnest endeavour to do his duty towards his fellow-men, prove that he must have gained more practical guidance from it than his mistaken and unhappy friend.

"After a journey of six months and twelve days," writes Wilkie in his journal on the 27th of February, 1841, "we have at last reached the most interesting city in the world

—Jerusalem. This struck me" (on beholding it from the heights) "as unlike all other cities; it recalled the imaginations of Nicholas Poussin; a city not for every day, not for the present, but for all time—as if built for an eternal sabbath." Wilkie wrote a great many interesting letters to his friends and brother-artists during his stay in Jerusalem, expressing in all of them the great interest he felt in the scenes by which he was surrounded, and especially how important he thought it that these sacred places should be known to the artist with a view of giving greater and more impressive truth to representations of Bible History. To Sir Robert Peel he wrote the following words, the truth of which has been most strikingly exemplified within the last few years.

"It is a fancy or belief that the art of our time and of our British people may reap some benefit that has induced me to undertake this journey. It is to see, to inquire, and to judge, not whether I can, but whether those who are younger, or with far higher attainments and powers, may not in future be required, in the advance and spread of our knowledge, to refer at once to the localities of Scripture events, when the great work is to be essayed of representing Scripture History. Great as the assistance, I might say the inspiration, which the art of painting has derived from the illustration of Christianity, and great as the talent and genius have been, this high walk of art has called into being, yet it is remarkable that none of the great painters to whom the world has hitherto looked for the visible appearance of Scripture scenes and feelings, have ever visited the Holy Land." The great Venetian painters, he goes on to say, were enabled, by their intercourse with the Levant, to give to their work an Eastern character, but even such minds as Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci might, he considered, have derived help had they studied in the Land of Moses. "The time, however," he concludes, "is now come when our supply in this walk of art must be drawn from the fountain-head. The facility of travelling, as well as recent public events, favour our pursuits in this sacred quarter; and I am highly grateful at being permitted to see, with my

own natural eyes, what Jerusalem in our day can still present to us."

It was reserved however for one of the greatest painters of our own day to realize Wilkie's ardent desire. Mr. Holman Hunt's Eastern and Scriptural scenes have just that truth of circumstance and detail which Wilkie felt was wanting in the great painters of Italy.

On the 7th of April, Wilkie left Jerusalem, and after a somewhat dangerous passage from Jaffa, arrived at Alexandria on the 26th, on his way back to England. Here he was detained for about three weeks, waiting for the Oriental steamer. During this time, however, he was not allowed to be idle, for the renowned Pacha, Mehemet Ali, requested him to take his portrait, and gave him four long sittings for that purpose. This picture must have been the last work upon which he was engaged, for it occupied him until the time came for leaving Alexandria. He was to finish it in England, have it framed, and then send it back to his highness. So disposed the Pacha, but the portrait was destined to arrive in England without the painter.

On the 26th of May, Wilkie wrote most cheerfully to his sister from on board the Oriental steamer, sending off the letter by way of Malta and Marseilles, in order that it might reach London a few days before his own anticipated arrival. On the 27th he again recorded in his journal his desire that the illustrators and commentators on Scripture "should be acquainted with the country whose history and aspect they profess to teach." These were the last words he wrote. He had been slightly ill whilst the ship was at Malta, but on the evening of the 31st of May he appeared on deck as usual, and seemed to have shaken off his ailments; but when the ship surgeon went to visit him in his cabin on the following morning, he found that his speech was incoherent and his pulse rapid. Various remedies were tried, but, says the surgeon, "he continued gradually sinking until about eleven o'clock, when he expired without a struggle." June 1st, 1841. The ship, which was in Gibraltar Bay at the time of his death, immediately put back to the town, but the authorities re-

fused to allow the body to be landed, on account of quarantine regulations. So the ship's carpenter made a coffin, and at half-past eight in the evening, as the log-book of the steamer records, the engines were stopped, and the body of David Wilkie was committed to the deep.

The news of Wilkie's death caused grief throughout all England, for he was the favourite painter both of the people and the court. The council of the Academy wrote a letter of condolence to his brother and sister, which was signed by 225 artists, and Sir Robert Peel presided at a meeting which voted a statue in his honour.

Haydon appears to have been sincerely and deeply affected by his loss, and for many months afterwards his journal shows that his thoughts dwelt constantly on his friend. He dreamt of him, and awoke, exclaiming, "Poor Wilkie." He "read prayers and prayed for his soul;" he "wrote to Sir Robert Peel to relieve his thoughts," and "heard his voice fifty times a day;" and although even his dreams express the same egotistical character as his waking thoughts, he doubtless mourned for his dear old companion with true sorrow of heart. One entry in his diary concerning Wilkie's death is too characteristic to be passed over. He writes, 18th June: "My only regret is the thirty-nine Academicians were not flung" (into the sea) "after him, as they ought to have been, on the ancient principle of sacrificing to the manes of a distinguished man!" Poor Haydon! His "glorious triumphs" are mostly forgotten now, and his bitter remarks no longer leave an unpleasant flavour in men's mouths. He and his friend may now have met, as he so fervently desired, "cleansed of all earthly frailties, never to separate more." Yes; and reconciled, may be, to the unappreciative Forty, and even, let us hope, to "the most impotent painter in the solar system."

"The recollections of all my intercourse with Wilkie," writes Leslie,[1] "and I knew him for about twenty years, are altogether delightful. I had no reason ever to alter the

[1] Leslie's "Recollections," vol. i. p. 173.

opinion I first formed of him, that he was a truly great artist and a truly good man. The little peculiarities of his character, as they all arose from the best intentions, rather endeared him to his friends than otherwise. He was a modest man, and had no wish to attract attention by eccentricity; and indeed all his oddity, and he was in many things very odd, arose from an extreme desire to be exactly like other people. Naturally shy and reserved, he forced himself to talk. I can easily conceive, from what I knew of him, that he had a great repugnance to making speeches at dinners or public meetings; yet knowing that from the station he had acquired he must do such things, he made public speaking a study. He carried the same desire of being correct into lesser things, not from vanity, but from a respect for society, for he considered that genius did not give a man a right to be negligent in his manners even in trifles. When quadrilles were introduced, Wilkie set himself diligently to study them, and drew ground plans and elevations of the new dances to aid him in remembering the figures. He was always ceremonious, but as I have said, from modesty, and not from pride or affectation, for no man had less of either."

Such was the man, in his strength and in his weakness; a man of whom a friend of twenty years' standing was able to write, "He was a truly great artist, and a truly good man."

WILLIAM MULREADY.

WILLIAM MULREADY is characterized by Wornum in his Catalogue of the National Gallery as "the most distinguished of British *genre* painters since Sir David Wilkie," and perhaps this defines as nearly as may be the place he occupies in English art. In some respects, indeed, his art is superior to that of Wilkie; his knowledge of drawing is more masterly, and his colour at times more subtle in its harmonies; but he lacks that entire sympathy with his subject Wilkie ever felt, and that more than anything else has contributed to make his works so popular. Mulready's works are, of course, popular too, but they do not, like Wilkie's, touch the heart; they only please the taste, or displease it, as the case may be. They are also much more limited in their range than Wilkie's; and so, in spite of their consummate art, we are fain to rank those of the hearty, sympathetic Scotch painter above them.

William Mulready was Irish by birth, born at Ennis, in the county of Clare, on the 1st or 30th of April (authorities differ as to the exact date), in the year 1786; but when he was only five years old, his father, who was a leather breeches maker by trade, came to London and settled in Soho, where he appears to have got work, but only as a journeyman, whereas he had been a master workman in Ireland. The Mulready family were at this time evidently very poor, but the worthy father appears to have attended more than might be expected to his son's education.

The little William was earlier even than most heaven-born artists in making known the direction of his genius. In after years he used to relate with much humour the manner in which his taste for the fine arts was first discovered. One day, when the father (and mother also, we suppose) went to work, the child was locked for safety into

the single room they tenanted. When his father returned, William was nowhere to be seen; but on searching farther, "a pair of rosy sturdy legs were seen protruding from beneath the bedstead," and on dragging them out it was found that the young rascal to whom they belonged was busily employed in making a copy with a bit of common chalk of an old engraving of St. Paul's, which hung in the room, and that he had selected as a suitable panel for the purpose the bare boards under the bedstead. This work, according to "The Looking Glass," was achieved before the family left Ireland; and when he came over to England, at the age of five years and a half, he immediately recognized the cathedral from the copy he had made. In drawing it he began, it is stated, at the cross, descended to the dome, imitating all the different mouldings and cornices as he went, and so on to the bottom of the building.

The floor has always been a favourite sketching-ground for youthful artists. Wilkie, it will be remembered, drew pictures of "bonnie ladies" and other subjects on the floor of the nursery in the old Scotch manse; Etty sketched on the boards in his father's mill; but Mulready, it must be admitted, beat both of them in ingenuity in discovering the utility of that bare patch beneath the bedstead.

The history of Mulready's child-life is related pretty faithfully in an old and now very rare story-book for children, published in London in 1805, called "The Looking Glass: A Mirror in which every Good little boy and girl may see what He or She is; and those who are not yet quite good, may find what they ought to be;" or, as the title-page has it—"A True History of the Early Years of an Artist, calculated to awaken the emulation of YOUNG PERSONS of both sexes in the pursuit of every laudable attainment, particularly in the cultivation of the Fine Arts."

This quaint little 12mo. volume was written (under the *nom de plume* of "Theophilus Marcliffe") by William Godwin, the author of "Caleb Williams," who is supposed to have composed it from information supplied to him by Mulready, or else to have taken it from Mulready's con-

versations about his boyish attempts. In any case, the young artist of the book whose adventures are related is undoubtedly William Mulready; and though he sometimes pretended that the work was published without his knowledge, it is evident that he must have been interested in it, for the little outline drawings which illustrate the text of the story are by him—facsimiles, no doubt, of some of his earlier efforts. The book is now extremely rare; in fact, can scarcely be met with except at the British Museum. It is a wonder it has not been republished, for, although written in the old-fashioned moral strain of that day, it is not uninteresting. Some of the drawings given are stated to have been done at three, five, and six years old, and no doubt truthfully, for they are not more remarkable than many clever children produce at those ages. The frontispiece, an achievement of his ninth year, represents a boy going through the broadsword exercise, with his hat stuck on his left arm by way of shield; while other designs depict a hare, a grampus, and wooden soldiers exercising.

The education that young Mulready received while he was thus teaching himself to draw was somewhat irregular, but does not seem to have been deficient. On his parents' first settling in London, in Old Compton Street, Soho, he went to a school in the neighbourhood kept by a Wesleyan minister named Underwood. Here he remained until he was ten, when he was sent to a Roman Catholic school in Castle Street, Long Acre, to be brought up in the "old faith," as he was fond of calling it. After this he passed nearly two years with an Irish chaplain, and then some time with one or two other Roman Catholic priests, who appear to have taught him the usual amount of Latin, and perhaps a little Greek. But, what was more important to him than this school-training, he quickly developed a great love for reading. He used to study at the old bookstalls on his way backwards and forwards to school, and would often make little geometrical drawings of the kind called "Turks' caps" and sell them for pence to his playfellows, in order to be able to purchase some coveted volume. He first read Pope's "Homer," according to "The Looking

Glass," standing at a stall in Covent Garden, where his handsome intelligent face so struck the proprietor that he often afterwards lent him books to take home, and advised him to try his hand in colouring prints, then a very usual occupation with young artists; but Mulready, it seems, made a mess of it.

His taste for drawing was, however, unmistakable, and several persons noticing the boy's undoubted talent, encouraged him to persevere. Among these was an artist named Graham, who, says Godwin, first perceived the boy chalking letters on a wall in the street after the manner of the advertisements of those days. He did this so firmly and cleverly, while at the same time he held forth to an admiring group of urchins on the proper treatment of the letters, that Graham's attention was excited, and he asked the little lad if he would not like to come and sit to him for a picture he was then painting of Solomon receiving the blessing of his father David. Mulready was, of course, delighted, and the sittings took place; the youthful Solomon being placed, as he ever afterwards remembered, "kneeling before his royal father, his face raised reverently to his parent, and one hand extended towards him." A piece of yellow satin was thrown over his shoulder for the purpose of reflecting a strong light upon his chin, an arrangement which first set our young artist a-thinking on the mysteries of light and shade. His jealousy during these sittings was, it is true, somewhat excited by the artist's introducing the flowing yellow locks of another boy—a playmate named Jack—to add to the beauty of his Solomon; but the head was in the main a portrait of the boy Mulready, and he no doubt learnt a great deal from seeing it painted. Unfortunately, Graham went to Scotland shortly after painting this picture, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1797, and Mulready saw no more of him for some years. His example and encouragement had, however, quite confirmed the boy in his desire to be an artist. "It was now," writes Godwin, "that the idea seems first to have suggested itself to him of improving his rude outline of the figure by a study after nature. His father was a tall, strong, muscular, well-made man of

six feet high. He had often heard his father's leg celebrated as the model of what a leg ought to be, and he now began to copy after it, and in his bounty to give it to the figure of 'my uncle.' He first remarked that it was larger in the middle than at either extremity. He accordingly gave a swell to the legs of his figure; but he made them swell equally on both sides. These legs were ridiculed by his father and his visitors, who called them 'Cockney's legs.' This taught him to examine his model afresh, and he then found that the leg, if seen in profile, had only one outline swelling and the other comparatively *straight*. He corrected his copy accordingly. This was his own discovery; for though his critics ridiculed his performance, they never told him where the fault lay, and it may be had no clear idea of it themselves."

Mulready's parents seem to have been quite aware of the talent of their clever son, only they had not the means of giving him any regular training in art, and so were obliged to leave him to his own devices, which was probably the best thing they could have done.

When about twelve years of age he was attracted to the theatre; and although he could not often afford to enter, he would wait about the doors for hours for the chance of seeing Kemble come forth. He used to draw portraits of Kemble in all his favourite characters, and once also he drew a harlequin with such happy skill that it attracted the notice of another painter, a young Irishman named Neill, who, seeing the portrait in the boy's hand as he stood at Aldrich's stall, spoke to him and recommended him to go to a certain Mr. Baynes—a drawing master—for instruction. Baynes confirmed Neill's opinion of Mulready's talent, though, being simply a landscape painter, he refused to receive him as a pupil. A Mr. John Corbet, a gentleman of artistic tastes, who kept a puppet-show in the Strand, was next applied to, for the reason, it would seem, that Mulready's uncle made his boots, and he kindly lent the boy various drawings to copy and a cast from the Apollo, in order that he might study "the round." This had always been a difficulty to him, and especially how to draw three-quarter faces in correct proportion; but Corbet

directed him to Walker's "Anatomy," which was eagerly mastered, his favourite place of study for this and other works being in a chapel near Buckingham Gate, adjoining the house of his schoolmaster. Here he used to ensconce himself under the altar and work away free from interruption from his schoolfellows.

His progress was so rapid that Corbet was astonished, and for some reason or other—probably because his name stood first in the list of Academicians—he advised him to apply to the sculptor Thomas Banks for instruction. A more unlikely man to help him could scarcely have been hit upon; but Mulready, now a boy of thirteen years and one month old, presented himself one day before the sculptor, in a great state of agitation—with a drawing from the Apollo in his hand. Strange to say, Banks took him in hand, and, after sending him to a drawing-school in Furnival's Inn Court for a time, allowed him to work in his own studio. Here he drew diligently for nearly twelve months, and at the end of that time was admitted as a student in the Royal Academy. This was in 1800, when he was only fourteen years old; but he had already made drawings from the antique, and a drawing from a statue by Michelangelo was the work by which he gained his admission as probationer in the Academy.

This much-desired point being achieved, his progress was sufficiently rapid. A drawing from the antique group of "The Bathers," exhibited with his other drawings at South Kensington, and dated 1800, is written upon, in a boy's round hand: "for permission to draw from the living model in the Royal Academy." So it would seem that even thus early he sought admission to the Life School; and shortly after, when he was only sixteen, he gained the silver palette of the Society of Arts for his skill in painting.

It is at this point that Godwin's account of his early years ceases. The boy-artist was now, in his own estimation, at all events, a man, and able to work for himself. From the age of fifteen he was determined to be no longer any burden on his parents; and indeed by various means managed to make his own living from this

time, though sometimes it must have been a somewhat shifty one.

It was at about this age that Mulready became acquainted with John Varley, the genial water-colour painter, astrologer, pugilist, friend of Blake, and popular drawing master, in whose school so many of our painters who afterwards rose to eminence were educated. Varley appears to have quickly recognized Mulready's talent, and also his teaching capabilities, for he took him into his house, where he helped in giving instruction to his clever band of pupils, among whom might be reckoned at that time such men as David Cox, Copley Fielding, John Linnell, W. Turner (of Oxford), and William Hunt, who entered the school at a very early age—a sickly boy with a big head—and was placed under Mulready's especial care.

But Mulready, unfortunately, did not confine his attentions solely to Varley's pupils. The water-colour painter had two sisters living with him, with one of whom Mulready fell in love, marrying her, with true Irish improvidence, when he was only eighteen years of age, and at a time when, if he could support himself, it was at all events as much as he could do. At four-and-twenty he was the father of four children. "I remember the time," he once said, "when I had a wife, four children, nothing to do, and was six hundred pounds in debt." He appears, indeed, to have endured all the bitterness of poverty at this period of his career, and without even love to sweeten the cup, for his marriage proved a very unhappy one, and he and his wife were separated after a few years. She likewise was an artist, and has exhibited pictures at the Royal Academy; but little is said of her in Mulready's life, except that she caused "much of the trouble of it." She lived to be an old woman, surviving her husband, from whom she had been wholly separated for nearly fifty years, by a few months.

"It would be a matter of great interest," say Messrs. Redgrave, "when we consider the art of his later years, if we could trace, subject by subject, the works which young Mulready was obliged to undertake to enable him to live and

to support the family which began so early to arise around him; but to this at present we have no clue." Certain it is that his labours were of the most varied description. "He had tried his hand at everything," he used to say, "from a miniature to a panorama," and this would seem to have been literally true, for it is believed that he was employed by Sir Robert Ker Porter on a panorama representing the Storming of Seringapatam, exhibited in 1800, when Mulready was only fourteen years old; and Mr. Stephens thinks it probable that a large battle-piece by Sir R. K. Porter, painted a few years later, and now in the Guildhall, was also partly painted by this bold youth.

But at the time of his marriage it was probably by teaching drawing—a profession which he followed nearly all through his life—that the greater part of his income was derived. Like Crome and several other masters, Mulready was from first to last a teacher; and though he did not, like Crome, found a distinctive school, his influence and example as a careful draughtsman were powerful over much of the art of his time. He himself, indeed, is recorded to have said "that he was a drawing-master all his life, with superfluous time for painting." From the moment when he entered Banks's studio, a boy of fourteen, to the time when, as an old man, he took his turn, to the joy of the students, as Visitor in the Life School of the Academy, and drew the outline of the model with the accuracy and rapidity of constant practice, he never allowed himself to perform any careless or weak work. "I have drawn all my life," he said, "as if I were drawing for a prize." This vigour of purpose, shown in other things as well, and contrary to the usual facility of an Irish nature, stood him in good stead, and preserved him, no doubt, amidst the difficulties of his early life.

Book illustration was another means by which he made a little money. A whole series of the children's books of that day—books that are for the most part unknown to the children of the present time—were illustrated by him. Of these S. Redgrave enumerates in his dictionary the popular "Butterfly's Ball, or Grasshopper's Feast," sold even then for one penny; "The Lion's Masquerade,"

"The Peacock at Home," "The Elephant's Ball," "The Lobster's Voyage to the Brazils," "The Cat's Concert," "The Lioness's Ball," "The Fishes' Grand Gala," "Madame Grimalkin's Party," "The Jackdaw at Home," "The Lion's Parliament," "The Water King's Levée," and "Think before you Speak."[1] To these little books, which some readers may remember as having given them pleasure in their childhood, may no doubt be added others now quite forgotten. Many of those mentioned have, indeed, become exceedingly rare, and are only to be found at the British Museum.

With regard to painting, he probably began, like most ambitious Academy students of that time, with aspirations towards High Art; at least, so it would seem by the high-sounding titles of his first pictures: "Ulysses and Polyphemus," "The Disobedient Prophet," a large cartoon of "The Judgment of Solomon," and a small painting on millboard of "The Supper at Emmaus." None of these works, it is said, gave any great evidence of talent; and, strange to say, it was as a landscape painter that he made his first appearance at the Academy. In 1804, the year of his marriage, he exhibited three pictures, two being views of Kirkstall Abbey, in Yorkshire, and the other a "Cottage at Knaresborough, in Yorkshire." These subjects give evidence of a trip to Yorkshire—probably undertaken with Varley, whose example, we may infer, led him to try this branch of art. In 1805 he also exhibited three landscapes; in 1806 three more; in 1807 figures were introduced, notably in "Old Kaspar," of "Battle of Blenheim" fame. This was a small picture, carefully finished, but not as yet showing any original genius. This was followed, in 1808, by a little work called "The Rattle," exhibited at the British Institution, and the "Dead Hare" and a "Girl at Work," at the Academy. In 1809 he sent to the Academy "Returning from the Alehouse," since called "Fairtime;"[2]

[1] I find also under his name, in the British Museum Catalogue, "The King and Queen of Hearts," "Nong Tong Paw," "Gaffer Gray," "The Sullen Woman," "The Jackdaw at Home." Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare" are also supposed to have been illustrated by him.

[2] The picture in the National Gallery of two tipsy men returning

and to the British Institution his first work of any importance, "The Carpenter's Shop," being influenced, no doubt, in sending it there by the prize of fifty guineas offered by the Directors, which would have been extremely useful to him, no doubt, at that time. He did not get it, however, for it was awarded to a feeble but somewhat popular painter named Sharp, for *genre;* and to *Master* Linnell, now our esteemed veteran, Linnell, Sen., for *landscape;* although Sir George Beaumont declared to Wilkie that he liked Mulready's work much the best.

After "The Carpenter's Shop," which was a simple domestic scene, with no reference to sacred history, this line of art was finally adopted by Mulready, who was, probably, stimulated in it by the success that Wilkie had just achieved with his "Blind Fiddler." Wilkie's influence may, indeed, be seen in several of Mulready's works at this period—most noticeably, perhaps, in "The Barber's Shop," exhibited in 1811, wherein a red-headed lout of a boy is clipped by the village barber, to the evident satisfaction of his old grandmother, who stands by and thinks that her darling only needs the barber's skill to make him a perfect Adonis.

In his subsequent pictures, though dealing with the same class of subjects, his treatment differs wholly from that of Wilkie; so that it would be impossible even for the untrained to mistake the work of one painter for the other. His mode of work also was unlike Wilkie's; for whereas the Scotch painter made but few sketches, and generally worked direct from the life, the Irish drawing-master made numerous studies for every work, and every portion of every work—studies in chalk, studies in pen-and-ink, and studies in oil—as we can see by the charming collection of these interesting records gathered together at South Kensington. In many of these sketches he seems to be thinking out an idea, as it were, with pencil or chalk in hand; and we see the consummate mastery of the artist even more, perhaps, in such works as these than in his

from a fair. The present background was added in 1840, when it was exhibited for the second time at the Royal Academy and bought by Mr. Vernon.

elaborately-finished paintings. Not but that many of his drawings are elaborately finished also, for he often prepared these so carefully that they really contain little less work than the picture for which they were meant as studies. Even for such a comparatively unimportant picture as the portrait of Mr. Sheepshanks with his servant in his library, there are at South Kensington two preliminary water-colour drawings of beautiful finish, and differing very slightly in detail. One can scarcely understand why so much work was bestowed on the architectural details of the room, the quaint frills of the servant's cap, the tray and cup and saucer that in one of them she holds in her hand; but this was Mulready's mode of procedure—he thought out everything in sketches before he painted the final picture.

In 1813 Mulready exhibited at the Royal Academy his picture of "Punch," the first in which his distinctive style as an artist was made prominently apparent. This achieved a certain success that was continued in 1815 by "Idle Boys," a picture which gained for him the distinction of being elected as Associate; and in the February of the following year, with a rapidity almost unprecedented, and of which, according to Messrs. Redgrave, there is no subsequent instance, he received the full honours of Academician, before even he had exhibited another picture; so that his name never appeared as Associate in the Academy Catalogue. Certainly the picture he exhibited in 1816, the year of his election, fully justified the judgment of the Academy with respect to the talent of their young painter. It was the well-known "Fight Interrupted," now in the Kensington Museum, in which the village schoolmaster effectually separates the two young combatants by holding one by the ear while he listens deprecatingly to the eager account of the fight given by an excited young spectator.

Mulready's position as a painter was now fully assured; yet he still continued to make his chief income from giving drawing lessons, painting pictures only in what he called his superfluous time. There now followed in quick succession such well-known works as "Lending a Bite," exhibited

in 1818; "The Wolf and the Lamb," 1820; "The Careless Messenger Detected," 1821; "The Convalescent from Waterloo," 1822; "The Widow," 1824; "The Travelling Druggist," 1825; "Origin of a Painter," 1826; "The Cannon," 1827; "Interior of an English Cottage," 1828; "Returning from the Hustings," 1830; "Dogs of Two Minds," 1830; "A Sailing Match," 1831; "Scene from St. Ronan's Well," 1832; "The Forgotten Word," 1832; "The First Voyage," 1833; "The Last In," 1835; "Giving a Bite," 1836; "A Toy Seller," the first design for the picture left unfinished by the artist; "The Brother and Sister" (first design for the beautiful picture afterwards painted for Mr. Vernon), 1837; "The Seven Ages," 1838; "Bob Cherry," 1839; "The Sonnet," 1839; and "First Love," 1840.

In these two last-named pictures Mulready's art reached its highest perfection. Nothing can well be more masterly in its way than the perfectly simple and graceful design and rich harmonious colour of these two works. In the "First Love" the warm glow of sunset sheds a splendour of colour over the whole scene which has scarcely been surpassed by any of our greatest colourists, while the tender grace of the girl who carries her young brother in her arms, and the dawning of sentiment in the face of the young man who watches her with sweet and yet sad emotion, form a poem that is merely expressed on canvas instead of in verse. The same may be said of "The Sonnet," a work aptly so named, for not only does the title fit the subject of the picture, but the whole composition evinces the exquisitely balanced power of the greatest sonnet-writers. It is a passionate love-poem such as Shakespeare might have addressed to the "master-mistress of his passion," yet all we see is the bending figure and back of the head of the young lover, and the upper part of the face of the girl, who holds a somewhat too large hand up to her mouth, apparently biting it, to conceal her confusion and perhaps her secret amusement at being addressed in such a style. Nothing but this and a few stems of trees for background, and a distant landscape as a duly subordinate setting for the figures, and yet the painter's thought is conveyed with

the fullest effect. We feel that anything added or withdrawn would have marred the harmony of the whole.

There are only very few other of his pictures of which so much can be said. In many of them we are jarred by a certain want of refinement which makes itself evident both in the colour and the composition; in others, instead of the rich lustrous colour which was Mulready's especial forte, we have a somewhat thin coat of colour and pale though transparent and brilliant tones. This is seen especially in his large painting of the "Seven Ages," at South Kensington; but it is only fair to state that he never regarded this picture as finished, but wished to work upon it again after it was bequeathed by Mr. Sheepshanks to the nation. No subsequent working, however, would ever have given it the strength of some of his other works. Though the most ambitious, it is, perhaps, the least successful of his pictures. Space will not permit of criticism of the other works mentioned; and, as they are so well known, description is not necessary. Scarcely any master is better represented at South Kensington.

In 1840 Mulready, returning once more to book illustration, published a series of designs to the "Vicar of Wakefield;" and finding in that delightful tale a rich vein of subject-matter for his art, he afterwards painted three pictures from it which now rank among his most popular works. The "Whistonian Controversy" was the first of these, exhibited in 1844, and then followed "Choosing the Wedding Gown," in 1846; and "Sophia and Burchell Haymaking," in 1847.

"Choosing the Wedding Gown" is, perhaps, the most universally admired of all Mulready's works. Everyone knows the sweetly critical look of the future Mrs. Primrose as she holds up the stuff she is buying to the light to test its quality, and the slyly observant and somewhat amused look of the young divine, who is deducing a moral from her conduct; but no one who has not seen the original of this oft-reproduced painting, and given it careful study, can appreciate the full richness of its colour, the admirable manner in which every detail is made to contribute to the general sense of comfort and satisfaction, and the well-

nigh perfect execution of the whole. Messrs. Redgrave, writing of this and the "Whistonian Controversy" from a technical point of view, remark that, while "an autumnal tone pervades the 'Controversy,' 'Choosing the Wedding Gown' is fresher and more springlike in colour, agreeing with the opening life of the young Vicar and his fair and notable wife. In this picture the full force of the palette is given—the brightest vermilion, the richest green, the purest ultramarine; yet all are thoroughly harmonized. Some of the colours are obtained by rich glazings; some by painting the semi-solid pigments directly over the pure white ground of the panel: and the Venetian methods have been better understood than by any painter of the school. The discrimination of the textures, also, as seen in these two pictures, is well worthy careful study: the parchment books and table-cover in the first, the rich stuffs at the foot of the tradesman's counter in the second; while the end of the counter itself is curious, and shows that it is an imitation of imitative mahogany. What a nice distinction to achieve in its pictorial reproduction!" How admirably expressed is also the silky soft coat of the luxurious little spaniel who curls himself in snug content and warmth against this wonderfully painted counter! Mulready was always fond of introducing dogs into his pictures, and drew them with great skill, seizing the salient points of their characters with humorous appreciation. The grave old dog, for instance, in "Train up a child in the way he should go," is thoroughly expressive of cautious distrust. He does not bark at the ugly Lascars, or sniff round them to find out whether they are worthy of his attention, but simply regards them with suspicious observance, no doubt deeming that his young master's display of generosity is not worth much and is slightly misplaced.

This picture, as well as "Crossing the Ford," in the National Gallery, was exhibited before the "Vicar of Wakefield" series. It was considered by Mulready himself to be his finest work, and many critics also reckon it as the one in which he arrived at the highest point of excellence. But although the execution is undoubtedly very fine, the situation is theatrical and repellent, the whole

attention being absorbed by the boy, while no pity is evoked for the unfortunate Lascars. The dog, to my mind, is the only wise person in the picture. It was painted for Mr. Baring, in whose collection it still remains, but was greatly injured by fire soon after it first came into his possession, and was sent back to Mulready for restoration, who, it is said, brought it to its present richness of tone by careful and patient repainting. Possibly it was because he had spent so much time upon it that he esteemed it his best work.

"The Butt: Shooting a Cherry," exhibited in 1848, comes next in order among Mulready's best-painted works; but the vulgarity of its types detracts somewhat from the pleasure felt in the excellence of its execution. Here again the dog is admirable, being of exactly the same character as his human companions.

After this date Mulready's art appears to have declined, his two next pictures of "Women Bathing" and "The Bathers," both in the Baring Collection, not being in any way equal, it is said, to his previous works. I have not seen either of these, so cannot speak from personal knowledge. His larger version of the "Young Brother," painted for Mr. Vernon, and now in the National Gallery, cannot be said to show any great falling off in power.

This was the last picture of any importance that Mulready achieved, for his "Mother Teaching her Child to Pray," exhibited in 1859, is a feeble, spiritless performance; and his "Negro Toy Seller," also at South Kensington, was left unfinished at his death. Messrs. Redgrave speak of it as "an evidence of labour wrongly applied." His health was, in fact, greatly impaired during the time when he was painting his last pictures, though he continued to work with unabated energy, taking more especially to drawing from the life, as he had done in his student days, and labouring away at works of life-size, which, with a delusion generally got over in youth, he now in his old age imagined he had a mission to paint. It is recorded of him that "when over seventy-five years of age he set himself to practise drawing hands and heads rapidly in pen-and-ink, at the little life-school held by the painters of the neigh-

bourhood at Kensington." "I had lost somewhat of my power in that way," he said, "but I have got it up again. It won't do to let these things go."

He seems to have been a pleasant man in society, full of humour, and, according to Mr. Stephens, who knew him well, of great kindness of heart, evinced by his considerate attention to the wants of others and helpful hand to those in need. Children loved him and called him "a nice old gentleman;" and he would delight the mothers by his appreciation of the fine points of their babies. He could even keep these babies quiet and amused, while he was painting them, by the charm of his manner and conversation to them. Yet for all his geniality he lived a solitary life, and one overshadowed, it is to be feared, by domestic trouble. His biography reveals nothing of his inner thoughts, nor do his friends appear to have had any insight into the real heart of the man, for, though a pleasant companion, he was not one to be effusive in his intimacies, and seems to have had a great dislike to writing letters. None, at all events, are to be found in his biography, nor can I hear of any friends with whom he corresponded. Like Etty, he was a constant attendant at the Life School of the Academy, and was always a diligent Visitor when his time came round to fill this office. He was also an extremely useful member of the Council of the Academy, for he never expressed his views without due consideration, and when he did they generally carried weight.

His attention to Academy affairs was, indeed, unremitting, and called forth at one time an acknowledgment in the shape of a large silver goblet presented to him by seventy-three of his brother artists. It is related of him that during the complimentary speeches made on this occasion he occupied himself with drawing the portraits of the speechmakers on little scraps of paper lying about, some of which drawings turned out such excellent likenesses that they were afterwards engraved by Pye for his "Patronage of British Art."

Among his numerous works may also be mentioned that for the first penny postage envelope, which was issued by Rowland Hill in 1840. This was adorned by Mulready

with a charming design emblematical of Britannia sending forth her winged messengers to all parts of the globe, and various countries receiving them with delight.

The death of Mr. Sheepshanks must have been a great blow to Mulready, for Mr. Sheepshanks had not only been a munificent and constant purchaser, but likewise a kind and attached friend; and it was at his house, at Blackheath Park, that Mulready, it is said, by those who knew both host and guest, shone in his pleasantest and brightest light. He was a frequent visitor at Blackheath, and has left a record of his visits in the view he painted in 1852 from one of the windows—a view now in the Kensington Museum, with the rest of the large collection amassed by Mr. Sheepshanks.

This collection Mulready had the pleasure of seeing bestowed on the nation, and of arranging it to a great extent according to his own views in the gallery at South Kensington. He was always very particular about the hanging of his pictures, and when on the Hanging Committee of the Academy equally particular about the hanging of other people's, making plans and taking an immense amount of trouble in order to do the utmost justice possible to every work.

Besides his friendship with Mr. Sheepshanks, Mulready had a warm friend in Sir John Swinburne, who was also the purchaser of many of his pictures. He sometimes stayed with the Swinburne family at their seat at Capheaton, near Newcastle; but besides his journeys hither and, early in life, as we have seen, into Yorkshire, he does not appear to have travelled much, or ever to have crossed the Channel.

He resided chiefly at Kensington and Bayswater, and during the latter years of his life at No. 1, Linden Grove, where he built a large painting-room and formed plans for making it an ideal home for a painter to live in. From some cause or other, however, none of these plans were carried out, and the house and garden, in which he at first took great delight, remained neglected and bare—with skeletons, probably, shut in its cupboards, and ghosts of former days haunting its gloomy paths. One of his sons

lived with him here, and must have been a great comfort to him; but the rest of his family appear to have been scattered.

He had been for some time subject to attacks of heart complaint, but remained active to the last, fighting with resolute will against the disease he knew to be creeping upon him. Redgrave, who knew him well, records that on the night he died he walked away with him from a Committee meeting at the Royal Academy, but that Mulready thought it right to see Hardwicke, who was also there, home; Hardwicke being, he said, "such an invalid." Redgrave therefore left him to fulfil this friendly office. The next morning he heard that he had died during the night. This was on the 7th of July, 1863, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

There are several portraits of Mulready painted by his artist-friends, but none better, perhaps, than that in Wilkie's picture of "Duncan Gray," he having sat to Wilkie for the downcast lover in that well-known work.

BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON.

THE life of Haydon, as told by himself in the three volumes of autobiography edited by Tom Taylor in 1853, is one of the saddest in the annals of painting, and presents a study of curious psychological interest. Between the rightful self-confidence and resolute persistence under discouragement, which have so often marked the career of genius, and an over-estimate of one's own powers and obstinate persistence in effort beyond one's strength, it is very difficult to draw the line. If Haydon had only been successful, the world would have applauded his unflinching resolution, his unshaken belief at all times in himself; as it is, it only laughs at that resolution, and at the preposterous vanity of the man who adopted it.

Possibly Haydon may yet be destined to be reinstated in the opinion of critics, and in accordance with some new views with regard to art, may come again into favour with succeeding generations, like many painters, admired at the present day, who were but little esteemed by our predecessors. While no fixed canons exist, and art criticism is still for the most part a matter of taste and fashion, this is, of course, possible, for no one can be sure that the taste of their own age will be that of the next; all that can be said is that no signs of a Haydon revival are visible at present, so that the unfortunate artist has yet to wait for the fame he was always looking for, and the belief in the posthumous arrival of which, no doubt, helped to sustain his last painful hours.

The history of this "clamorous frenzied life" begins on the 25th of January, 1786, when Haydon *père*, who was also addicted to journal writing, records the birth of a son, the wind being at the time, he adds, "W.S.W." The family of Haydon was an old one in Devon; the

grandfather had entered into trade, and Haydon's father, at the time of his birth, was a bookseller at Plymouth. The little Benjamin Robert, after some years at a grammar school in Plymouth—where the master, a kind, eccentric, clever man, appears to have fostered his taste for art, and encouraged "a sort of idle country excursion habit" in his scholars—was sent for severer discipline to the Grammar School at Plympton—the same that Sir Joshua Reynolds had attended. But even here, though a certain amount of Latin and Greek was drilled into him, he spent his pocket-money in caricatures, and his holidays in copying them. After a time he returned to the parental shop, and was bound for seven years as apprentice to his father. "But," he says, "I hated day-books, ledgers, and cash books. I hated standing behind the counter; and insulted the customers. I hated the town, and the people in it. I rose early, and wandered by the sea; sat up late, and pondered on my ambition"—for already the ambition which was to be his bane had laid hold of the boy,—"and my whole frame convulsed," he says, "when I thought of being a great painter."

A Neapolitan journeyman in his father's employ seems to have been the first to tell him of the glories of Italian art—of Raphael and the Vatican,—and to have advised him to draw *de fegore* rather than landscape. With this aim he studied anatomy with the utmost zeal, buying an expensive copy of Albinus at a sale, which he characteristically sent home to be paid for by his father. Not even a severe illness, which overtook him at this time, and threatened blindness, shook him from his purpose. "See or not see," he declared, "a painter I'll be; and if I am a great one without seeing, I shall be the first."

Against such resolution as this there was no contending; so at last, on May 13, 1804, when he was just eighteen years of age, his father gave him £20, and he started at once for "London, Sir Joshua, Drawing, Dissection, and High Art." His enthusiasm was marvellous. He imagined he was destined to revive all the ancient glories of painting; and he worked at this period with the energy that perhaps such a belief alone could have given, and with

"gums becoming sore from the clenched tightness of the teeth."

Having entered at the Academy, his application was noticed by Fuseli, who appears in his odd way to have been very kind to him. Here also he made the acquaintance of Jackson, and soon after, when Wilkie came to London, of "the raw, tall, pale, queer Scotchman, with something in him," of whom, from the first, he seems to have been uneasily jealous.

This trio, however—Jackson, Wilkie, and Haydon—soon became great friends; and this pleasant student time, with its illimitable aspirations, was perhaps the happiest in the life of all three, certainly it is pleasantest to read of in that of Haydon, who has described its odd shifts in an amusing manner. Then came Wilkie's great success, and the failure, for so it must be considered, of Haydon's "Dentatus." This picture, which had been painted as a commission from Lord Mulgrave, to whom he had been introduced by Jackson, had awakened the highest hopes not only in the breast of the painter, who had determined that his hero's head "should be such as the greatest painter that ever lived would have made it," but likewise it would seem in the art circles of the day, and as he proceeded, his painting-room became full of people of rank and fashion, who came to see what Sir George Beaumont called "the extraordinary picture by a young man who had never had the advantages of foreign travel." The artist, with his fine antique head, had also much injudicious admiration bestowed upon him by these fine folk, so that altogether it was enough to turn a stronger brain than Haydon's. It seemed to him the realization of all his hopes, the foretaste of the fame that awaited him.

Never was disappointment so bitter. This picture, on which he had bestowed all his energies, working with fiery zeal and unflagging industry, dashing in his hero one day and dashing him out the next, sacrificing, as he says, "time, money, health, and relaxation, to this one great and overwhelming duty," was coldly received by the Academy, hung in the anteroom in a bad light, and was generally admitted, even by impartial critics, not to be the great

work that had been expected from the clever, impetuous young painter. To a temperament like Haydon's this was simply "agonizing." One cannot tell how he might have developed under success; but failure, instead of moderating his aspirations, drove him to bitter resentment.

Northcote had before warned him that if he made up his mind to be a historical painter, he was likely "to starve, with a bundle of straw under his head;" but no warning, no failure, turned him from his purpose; and the only result of the painful experience with regard to the "Dentatus" was that he began painting a huge picture of Macbeth for Sir George Beaumont, who had previously given him the commission, but who now, it was very evident, would gladly have got off it, or, at all events, have had a picture of much smaller size than Haydon insisted upon painting.

The history of the "Macbeth" was the same as that of the "Dentatus"—vast expectations, and painful realizations. The crushing misery of debt also, "out of which," he writes, in sad italics in his journal, "*I never have been, and never shall be extricated, as long as I live,*" was now added to his other anxieties. With this weight already pressing upon him at the age of twenty-six, and with the fate of the "Macbeth" still in the balance, as far as regards its sale (for Sir G. Beaumont, on seeing it, had declined to take it), Haydon published a furious attack on the Royal Academy, which, although, doubtless, not entirely unmerited, was the height of folly in his position. It set all the professors in "a hubbub of rage and fury." "From this moment the destiny of my life was changed. My picture was caricatured, my peace harassed; so great was the indignation at my impertinence that all merit was denied to 'Macbeth.' . . . I was looked at like a monster, abused like a plague, and avoided like a maniac." This is, of course, written with his wonted exaggeration; but even Wilkie was made "really wretched" by his friend's behaviour, and seems to have shunned him for a time. "There was nothing now left," he adds, "but victory or Westminster Abbey. I made up my mind for the conflict, and ordered at once a larger canvas for another work!"

This work was the "Judgment of Solomon," and it

brought him for a time something of the success of which he had dreamed. It was sold on the first day it was exhibited for £735.[1] This sum did not suffice to pay half the painter's debts, but unfortunately, perhaps, it established his credit. It was a victory in every sense of the word, he considered, but alas! he profited no more by victory than defeat.

"Christ's Entry into Jerusalem" was his next great picture. This likewise was a great success, although at the time when it was hung he had not the money to buy the materials for varnishing. He rushed off to Mr. Coutts, however, who had before lent him £400, and obtained £50 more for immediate necessities, "and," he says, "I never wrote 'I promise to pay' with such inspired fury before."

In spite, however, of the large sums he made by the exhibition of this picture (£1,760 in London only), his difficulties still continued, and his journal becomes a constant record of embarrassments, impatient creditors, arrests, battlings with money-lenders, and all the miserable anxieties of debt. He had a wife also by this time, and children were beginning to come; but these, although they added to his responsibilities, seem to have brought him the greatest happiness of his life. It is cheering in the midst of so much of vanity, disappointment, and worry to come across such a passage in the journal as this:—"December 31, the last day of 1821. I don't know how it is, but I get less reflective as I get older. I seem to take things as they come, without much care. As nothing is new when a man is thirty-five, one thinks less. Or, perhaps, being married to my dearest Mary, and having no longer anything to hope in love, I get more content with my lot, which, God knows, is rapturous beyond imagination. Here I sit, sketching, with the loveliest face before me, smiling and laughing, and 'solitude is not.' Marriage has increased my happiness beyond expression. In the intervals of study, a few minutes' conversation with a creature one loves is the greatest of all reliefs. God bless us both. My pecuniary difficul-

[1] Now in the possession of Lord Ashburton, who lent it to the 1862 Exhibition.

ties are still great, but my love is intense, my ambition intense, and my hope in God's protection cheering!"

But such passages as this are only brief gleams. More often the record is as follows:—"Sept 30. Out all day to battle with creditors—some I conquered, and some held out." Or, "I have many threatenings of arrests. God grant I may parry them next Monday, and get the week clear;" or, "Out all day to pacify, put off, and arrange. By God's blessing, at work to-morrow, and then for a head."

Nothing jars upon one so painfully in this journal as the egotistic petitions which he constantly addresses to the Deity. In these written prayers, he lays his soul bare, not only before Him whom he addresses, but likewise before his fellow mortals, with an unreserve that shocks our finer sense. But although his prayers are as Mr. Tom Taylor well says, merely "begging letters, despatched to the Almighty," his belief was sincere enough, and had practical effect in many ways over his life. God was to him a kind patron whom he could ask for help in all difficulties; and this simple faith must have been a great support when human patrons—Sir George Beaumont and other grand personages—failed him.

The history of his next great picture, "The Raising of Lazarus," is distressing from beginning to end. The mind of the painter was so frightfully harassed during the execution of this work that it is marvellous how he preserved calmness enough to paint at all. Three times whilst it was progressing he was arrested, though once the sheriff's officer who performed this duty was so overcome at being left alone with the Lazarus staring at him from out his grave-clothes, that he refused to take Haydon away, and accepted his word to meet him at the attorney's. When it was at last finished, he exhibited it on his own account, as he had done several of his other pictures; and all London seems to have flocked to see it, his receipts from the exhibition amounting for a short time to £200 a week. It was, in fact, in many respects the most remarkable work he had ever painted; though, as is natural, considering the circumstances under which it was accomplished, it is strangely unequal in all three qualities of conception,

design, and execution. The figure of Lazarus, with the dazed look, as of one suddenly coming into the light, is one of the finest realizations of the subject that painting has ever achieved; even Sebastian del Piombo's famous "Lazarus," though greater in power, has not the weird poetry of Haydon's conception; but the poetry of this figure, which is of the same kind as Rembrandt has infused into the subject, is marred by the jarring vulgarity of much of the rest of the picture. The figure of Christ, which has been much praised by some critics, seems to me miserably weak and inane; but even the very greatest masters have failed in their conceptions of Christ, and it is not this that disturbs the harmony of the work so much as the painful sense of effort that is visible throughout, an effort that has led to overstraining of effect, and in many of the figures to sheer vulgarity. In his Mary, a florid woman of the Rubens type, Haydon has evidently striven to reach the magnificence and warmth of colour of Rubens; but, unfortunately, he has only imitated that master's occasional coarseness. The Mother is said to have been painted from his washerwoman, and such a model can well be imagined. In the other figures, though many of them are cleverly drawn and well conceived, we feel the want of that calm dignity which distinguishes the works of the great masters of the Renaissance.

But whatever the faults and inequalities of the picture, its fate was extremely hard. Instead of being bought by the nation, as the artist hoped it would have been, it was seized by an angry and impatient creditor during the exhibition, and was sold by him for £300. "O God," writes the distressed artist, "Grant it may reach the National Gallery in a few years, and be placed in fair competition with Sebastian del Piombo. I ask no more to obtain justice from the world." Alas! this justice that Haydon desired has not yet been executed, for although it has reached the National Gallery at last, by the gift of Mr. R. E. Lofft, after having been left for years unnoticed and unsold, with other of Haydon's works at the Pantheon in Oxford Street, it is only hung on the great staircase, where most persons pass it by, while his rival's work holds the

place of honour in the large new gallery, and cannot fail to attract the notice of all.

The fate of the "Lazarus" seems to have been the final straw in poor Haydon's camel-load of misfortune at this period. A few days after its seizure, he was again carried off to prison, an execution was put into his house, and all his property advertised for sale. "The blow," writes his son, "was complete and sudden as it was intended. It rolled over them like a great tidal wave, and drowned out all their landmarks." His personal friends, on whom he had before called pretty often for help, came generously forward with Sir Walter Scott at their head, but his debts were too large, and the time had gone by when there could have been any hope of redemption. "A few great lords," continues the son, in the same bitter spirit as his father, "grumbled out their pity, looked on at his sale, never interfered to stop the dispersion of his collection, and left him mouldering in prison for the whole of the London season; a few thousands, a trifle from each, would have paid his debts and placed him in security to continue his labours. But no." Dispassionate critics cannot think this either strange or unkind. "Good work, as a rule," says a writer in a recent number of the "Cornhill Magazine," in a thoughtful essay on "Genius and Vanity," "is only done by people who have paid their bills." This is, perhaps, asserting too much; but certainly, in Haydon's case, the difficulties in which he was involved affected the quality of his art. "Live for art, if you will," the same essayist continues; "but first be sure that you have not to live by your art, otherwise the only harvest that you can reach will be that of the first reckless ebullitions when the responsibility of life does not weigh upon the buoyancy of youth."

Unhappily the responsibilities of life always weighed heavily on Haydon. When he came out of prison he would still have sacrificed everything to his High Art Vocation, as he conceived it to be; but his wife's earnest pleading prevailed, and he consented for a time, in order to support his family, to "shrink into a portrait painter;" and many of his portraits, it is sad to relate, were of his tradesmen in

payment of their bills. It is impossible not to feel pity for him at this time, with all his high aspirations brought thus low, and when the struggle for the daily wants of his family became almost maddening. "Merciful God," he writes, "that thou shouldst permit a being with thought and feeling to be so racked!" This was in 1824, and during the whole of the next twelve years we find the story still the same—ever one of pressing want and wretched shift; although, from the balance-sheet filed on insolvency in 1836, it is plain that he had received from the profits of his profession during the six years, from 1831 to 1836, no less a sum than £4,617, besides continual advances made by friends. This ought to have been sufficient, one would think, to prevent the degrading necessity of pawning, and of writing begging letters for help to pay taxes.

During this period, Haydon, indeed, though forced to live *by* art, instead of *for* it, accomplished some very good work. His portraits are not to be commended, for he seems to have revenged himself on his unfortunate sitters for the indignity he felt in having to paint them at all, by finding "an exquisite gratification" in painting them badly; but his picture of "The Mock Election," painted at this time from a scene which he had witnessed in the Queen's Bench, decidedly does not show any decline in power. Though one of the least ambitious, it is in truth one of his most attractive works, almost rivalling Hogarth in variety of character, skilful grouping, and force of colour. It is very different in this latter respect to the gaudy "Punch" or "May Day," that was painted about this same time, and that now hangs in the National Gallery, showing some of the worst qualities of Haydon's art.

"The Mock Election" was bought by George IV. for 500 guineas, and now hangs in the billiard-room of Windsor Castle, where I saw it a short time ago, and was glad to find one painting by Haydon that I could admire without being repelled by glaring faults. To "The Mock Election" succeeded a picture called "The Chairing of the Member," of the merits of which I cannot speak. It was not equally fortunate in finding a royal purchaser.

Before these last-named paintings were executed he had,

however, again failed—for so it may be called—with two larger canvases, for one of which he had taken the subject of "Eucles," and for the other, "Zenophon's First Sight of the Sea." Both these paintings had to be raffled for, as a means of disposing of them; and the latter was won by the Duke of Bedford, who presented it to the Russell Institution in Great Coram Street, where it still hangs—a melancholy example of "vaulting ambition that doth o'erleap itself."

Numerous smaller pictures, many of them of ideal subjects, were hastily painted during this same time, in order to meet the pressing needs of the hour. Most of these are now forgotten, and it is extremely difficult to find out what has become of them. Strange to say, Haydon has been hitherto wholly unrepresented at the winter exhibitions at Burlington House. It cannot be that the Royal Academy still nourish any feeling of resentment, so it would seem as if the owners of his pictures did not think them worth exhibiting.

In 1836, in the midst of all his distresses, Haydon began to turn his attention to public lecturing as well as painting, and obtained much deserved success in this line, for every one agrees that he was a good lecturer, and had an earnest manner and effective delivery. His two volumes of lectures on "Painting and Design," published in 1844, contain, indeed, a good deal of suggestive matter.

The applause with which his lectures were received was, as we see in his journal, some comfort to his wounded spirit; and another consolation was the commission which came to him from Lord Grey, in 1832, to paint "The Reform Banquet," the engraving of which is so well known. In 1834, also, the Duke of Sutherland gave him a commission for a "Cassandra," for which he received 400 guineas.

But he was deeply mortified again in 1841, when the Royal Commission was appointed to consider the question of the decoration of the Houses of Parliament, that he was not even consulted, though he had been petitioning the House for years with regard to this very object, and was the first who porposed to adorn the House of Lords.

When the cartoon-competition took place in 1843, Haydon, whether unfairly or not, it is difficult now to decide, found himself excluded from reward, though such an opportunity as that of being "let loose in the House of Lords," was what he had been sighing for, and working for half his life.

It was certainly very hard, whatever may have been the cause, and the disappointment seems at last to have broken his hitherto indomitable spirit. "Hankered after my divine art," he writes in 1843, "but feel oppressed by my ill-treatment." And again:—"My brain seems to require constant pressure to be easy, and my body incessant activity. In a great public work alone shall I ever find rest, which will never be afforded to me," and still more sadly, "Perhaps I have presumed too much on the goodness of my Creator—appealed to Him too much—too freely." It is evident that the end of the struggle was approaching, but two other large pictures, "The Banishment of Aristides," and "The Burning of Rome by Nero," were accomplished before it came. They were part of a series of six designs in illustration of "Government," which thirty-four years before, Haydon had conceived for the decoration of the old House of Lords, and as he states in his catalogue, "had laid before every minister up to the present day." Their exhibition in 1846 at the Egyptian Hall was a complete failure. Tom Thumb was being exhibited at the same Hall at the same time and by a sad mockery of circumstance drew crowds, while the despairing devotee to High Art lost £111 11*s.* 5*d.* by his exhibition.

It was the last bitter drop in the cup. On the 20th of June of this same year, 1846, he writes in his journal, as he had often done before, "O God, bless us through the evils of this day;" on the 21st, "Slept horribly. Prayed in sorrow, and got up in agitation;" and on the 22nd,

"God Forgive me. Amen.

"Finis of B. R. Haydon.

"'Sketch me no longer on this rough world.'— *Lear.*

"End of Twenty-sixth Volume."

After writing thus for the last time in his journal, he deliberately sought the rest he needed by means of a pistol fired by his own hand.

Let us hope that our poor baffled English artist, as well as his great Italian predecessor, may find to satisfy his restless desires :—

> "In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance—
> Four great walls in the New Jerusalem
> Meted on each side by the angel's reed."

WILLIAM ETTY.

WILLIAM ETTY is the only master of the English school who has made flesh-painting his especial study. Others, of course, have painted the nude from time to time, and occasionally with even greater skill, but none have ever made it, like Etty, the sole object of their devotion.

It was a strange choice for a quiet English artist, who, moving in a strictly conventional and domestic sphere, received none of those impulses which wrought upon the Venetian painters of the sixteenth century and produced that gorgeous sunset of art which we know as the Venetian school. For subtle sensuality of colour Etty's paintings cannot, it is true, be compared for a moment with those of the great masters of Venice, but he, like them, felt the attractive power of the human body, and made it the central conception of his art. At first, indeed, he tells us, he was somewhat drawn towards landscape: "The sky was so beautiful, and the effects of light and cloud;" but very soon, finding "that all the great painters of antiquity had become thus great through painting great actions, and the human form, I resolved," he says, "to paint nothing else;" and seeing, moreover, "God's most glorious work to be WOMAN, that all human beauty had been concentrated in her, I resolved to dedicate myself to painting—not the draper's or milliner's work—but God's most glorious work, more finely than ever had been done."

The painter with these tastes, more fitting the character of a Titian or Paris Bordone than a simple-minded cheery old bachelor in the nineteenth century, was born on March 10, 1787, in the ancient city of York, before that city had submitted to modern improvements, and while its magnificent minster was yet unmarred by restoration. But although born, as it were, under the shadow of the great

minster, a building for which he retained the deepest affection all his life, the immediate surroundings of Etty's birth were prosaic enough.

His father was a miller and gingerbread-maker, and kept a small shop in a street in York, called the Feasegate, which was managed by his mother, a notable woman of business, although she held a somewhat higher family position than her husband, and had received a better education. William was the seventh of ten children who were born to this worthy pair, the greater number of whom, however, died in infancy. The future painter was named after an elder brother, who had lived to be twelve, and who, strange to say, had also shown an inclination towards art.

This inclination very soon became apparent in the second William of this large family, who used, it is said, when a mere baby, to get possession of a bit of chalk, or stray coal, or stick charred in the fire, and scrawl with it over every bare board in shop or mill that he could reach. His ecstatic delight when his mother first gave him permission to use some colours mixed with gum-water, is described by himself; and an elder brother's gift of a box of water-colours was never forgotten. He could scarcely sleep that night, or even breathe for joy.

This artistic bent could not, however be encouraged. His parents were not rich enough—though the gingerbread trade appears to have been profitable, and the "Etty gilding," especially famous—to give their children much advantage in the way of schooling, and William coming late in the family, probably fared worse than his elder brothers. He was, however, sent to two or three inferior schools, employing his time out of hours not only in the congenial occupation of copying whatever came in his way in the line of art, but also, it would seem, in taking out the paternal gingerbread, for in after-years the celebrated painter was still remembered in York as the "shock-haired boy who brought round the baker's basket."

But before he had attained the age of twelve, both school and home-life were over for this poor little lad, who is described by one of his schoolfellows as having been singularly shy and timid, more like a girl or an old man than a

boy. Such a nature, added to the sensitive artistic temperament, was ill-calculated to bear the rough treatment of a printer's office; nevertheless, an opportunity offering, he was at this early age sentenced to "seven years' captivity," as he always called it—that is to say, he was apprenticed by his parents to a printer at Hull, in whose service he had to perform many "harassing and servile duties, late and early, frost and snow, sometimes till twelve at night, and up again at five," not even rest on Sunday, for the "Hull Packet," printed by his master, was published on a Monday, and thus involved Sunday work. This youthful term of servitude was always looked back upon by Etty, in after-life, with the bitterest recollection. Not that his master or mistress were purposely unkind to him, but that his position in their house, and his whole occupation in the office were utterly uncongenial to an aspiring boy who still secretly cherished the hope of one day becoming a painter.

It is to his credit that under these circumstances he performed his duties strictly, and was noted as a steady, industrious apprentice. Very little time could he have had for cultivating his taste for art, but such miscellaneous reading as came in his way was eagerly devoured and helped greatly in the self-culture that the printer's boy, even under all these difficulties, was gradually acquiring. Several of his artistic attempts at this time have been preserved, one being a rough etching made upon a bad shilling, and another—his earliest oil-picture—a country church painted on a piece of tin about six inches square.

But the seven years' servitude was at length passed, and the "golden hour of twelve on October 23, 1805, struck at last." This was the hour, long watched for on the dial of Hull Church, that released Etty from his apprenticeship, and its date was ever remembered by him down to the last few months of his life as "The Anniversary of my Emancipation from Slavery."

One sees that the iron must have entered deeply into the poor boy's soul, but happily it did not permanently sadden his cheerful spirit nor shake the tenacity of his purpose. From the moment of leaving the office at Hull he cast off the printer's apron and determined to be hence-

forth not a printer but a painter, "though he should get but threepence a day at it." An uncle who was a gold-lace merchant of some position in London afforded him the desired start by inviting him up to London on a visit for a few months to see what he was capable of.

His artistic powers could not at this time have been very remarkable, but they fortunately satisfied his uncle, who was delighted with the drawing of a favourite cat, which his nephew accomplished with such facility and truth to nature, that when the drawing was placed against the fender in the corner pussy loved, "no one," he tells us, "would have taken it for a drawing." His elder brother Walter also, of whom he had not hitherto known much, now took him in charge, and from henceforth we have a beautiful example of fraternal affection in these two brothers, the one helping, and the other being helped, with unembarrassed readiness. Walter, however, at this time was probably not rich enough to afford to establish his young brother, and it was the uncle, William Etty, a worthy British merchant, of whom Etty always spoke in the most grateful terms, who generously paid a hundred guineas to Sir Thomas Lawrence to receive the young student into his house. "Behold me, then," writes Etty in the autobiography[1] from which these details of his early life are chiefly drawn, "in the house of Sir Thomas, in an attic, the window of which you can yet see in Greek Street, Soho Square. I was left to struggle with the difficulties of art and execution; for Lawrence's execution was *perfect, playful* yet *precise*, elegant yet *free*. I tried, vainly enough, for a length of time, till *despair* almost overwhelmed me; I was ready to run away; my despondency increased. I was almost beside myself; here was the turn of my fate. I felt I could not get on; the incessant occupation of my master left him but little time to assist me; *despair* of success in copying his works had well-nigh swamped me; but here again is a lesson for the young; a voice within said, '*Persevere.*' I did so, and at last triumphed; but I was nearly beaten."

[1] Published, in the shape of letters addressed to a relative, in the "Art Journal" in 1849.

One can well understand that the fashionable Sir Thomas Lawrence, with his "playful," "precise," and "elegant" mannerism, was scarcely the master to stimulate original genius, but Etty got on no better at first at "*dear* Somerset House," where he was admitted, as Probationer in the Academy Schools, in 1807, when he was nearly twenty years of age. Beginning thus late as a pupil, Etty diligently endeavoured by earnest application to make up for the years he had lost; but his efforts for a long time seemed unavailing, and he was constantly spoken of by his fellow-students as "poor Etty," and pitied as one not likely to rise to fame.

Among these fellow-students were several whose names were even then beginning to be known. Wilkie, who had entered one year before, was steadily pursuing his own course, and was already engaged upon his "Blind Fiddler," Haydon, Jackson, Hilton, Mulready, Leslie, Constable, and Collins—the latter of whom entered in the same week as himself—were also there, a band of rising young artists. But Etty was by no means one of them, and might perhaps have given up his aspirations had it not been for Haydon, who always encouraged him to persevere in his efforts in high art.

Slowly but surely, or, as he himself writes, "silently and secretly," he was indeed making his way by daily and nightly study over the dangers and difficulties of his art.

For a long time, however, every picture he sent in was refused both by the Royal Academy and the British Institution, and all the many medals he competed for were won by others, to his infinite disappointment and "despair" at the time, but possibly to his ultimate advantage; for "I began to think," he writes, "I was not half the clever fellow I had imagined, and indeed I even began to suspect I was no clever fellow at all" (a great lesson learnt, at all events). "I thought," he continues, "there must be some radical defect; my master told me the truth in no flattering terms; he said I had a very good eye for colour, but that I was lamentably deficient in all other respects almost. I believed him. I girded up my loins and set to work to cure these defects. I lit the lamp at both ends of the

day. I studied the skeleton, the origin and insertion of the muscles. I sketched from Albinus, I drew in the morning, I painted in the evening, and after the Royal Academy went and drew from the prints of the antique statues of the Capitolini, the Clementina, Florentine, and other galleries, finishing the extremities in black-lead pencil with great care. This I did at the London Institution in Moorfields. I returned home, kept up my fire all night, to the great dismay of my landlord, that I might get up early next morning before daylight to draw; in short, I worked with such energy and perseverance to *conquer* my radical defects, that at last a better state of things began to dawn, like the sun through a November fog, and though I did not get a medal, from an informality on my part, I gained it in point of fact, for my picture was esteemed the best, and Mr. West said of it, it would one day be sold for a Titian."

This better state of things was inaugurated by a small painting of "Sappho" being accepted at the British Institution and getting itself sold for twenty-five guineas. In the same year also—1811—a painting of "Telemachus rescuing the Princess from the Wild Boar" was hung in the Royal Academy, but failed to attract notice.

From this time to the end of his life Etty never missed a year in exhibiting either at the British Institution or the Royal Academy, and generally several works at both. He had still some years to wait, however, before he achieved anything like reputation, but undauntingly he persevered, making in 1816 a short tour on the Continent by way of improving himself. This trip was not at all satisfactory. Etty, a thorough Englishman, could not relish foreign ways. His beloved teapot was interdicted, and finally broken. The *douaniers* annoyed him "like mosquitoes in a swamp." "Nothing can be got," he writes, "but omelettes, cheese, and sour wine," and everywhere, according to this home-sick traveller, "rain, banditti, bad roads," and miserable fare prevailed. At Florence he got so miserable that he decided to return home, and writes to his brother Walter, who paid the expenses of this journey: "If you have formed high hopes of me, they

shall not be disappointed; but I must dwell among my own people."

All his complaints vanish, however, even the love-sickness which, as well as sea-sickness, had been one of his maladies abroad, when he reaches his old little room in Surrey Street, Strand, where he once more sets to work with his accustomed diligence, inscribing "EARLY RISING! EARLY RISING!" as the motto in his sketch-books.

At last, in 1820, when he was already thirty-three, the slowly ripened fruit of his talent began to find favour with the public. In this year he exhibited at the British Institution a finished sketch for a painting of "Pandora," which attracted the notice of critics, and in the same year he sent to the Academy his "Coral Finders," which made, as he puts it, "a still greater noise." These were followed up by the "Cleopatra," commissioned by Sir Francis Freeling, of which Sir Thomas Lawrence said to the intensely flattered artist, "They" (the public) "leave Mark Antony" (meaning himself) "whistling in the market-place, and go to gaze on your 'Cleopatra.'" After this and a notice in the *Times* "I drove on," writes Etty, "like another Jehu."

In 1822 Etty again went abroad, and this time managed to endure foreign life for nearly two years. He has given us an interesting, even amusing account of all his doings and adventures in his journal and in the numerous letters he wrote home to his brother and other friends. As usual he was suffering from the pangs of disappointed love when he went away, and his enjoyment is occasionally clouded by the remembrance of a fair cousin whose portrait he had painted, and whom, in spite of her refusal, he could not quite make up his mind to resign. His love-sorrows, which are freely narrated in his journal, have a somewhat comic aspect. One cannot feel much sympathy, though his feeling seems to have been sincere enough, with a lover who can write thus: "*One* of my prevailing weaknesses was a propensity *to fall in love.* Perhaps, however, it is a weakness I would not wish to be incapable of, but what a miserable madness it is—though not without *ces delices.* When I ascended Vesuvius, and when in

the horrors of the French Revolution, I was deeply, desperately, almost hopelessly in love. My heart within was a volcano of itself." This of course was written long after the volcanic period had been passed, but even in old age the susceptible artist seems to have had slight, perhaps not altogether painful, returns of the malady.

In 1824, on coming back to England with years rolling over his head, he determines that *something* must be done, and so, after sending a finished picture of "Pandora crowned by the Seasons" to the Academy, a work of eight or nine figures, he sets to work on his first large canvas and paints the "Combat, or Woman interceding for the Vanquished," exhibited in 1825. This brought him considerable praise from his brother-artists, one of whom, John Martin, showed his appreciation by buying this colossal picture at the end of the exhibition for £300, the modest price Etty had himself set upon it. Sir Thomas Lawrence also purchased his "Pandora;' but still the general public and the usual patrons of art held aloof, although Lord Darnley commissioned another big picture, namely, the "Judgment of Paris," exhibited the next year.

His next and greatest attempt at the historic was his noble picture of "Judith," "first conceived," he tells us, "in York Minster, when the solemn tones of the organ were rolling through the aisles." This picture was not sold either at the Academy Exhibition in 1827, or at the British Institution, where it was sent in 1828; but the Scottish Academy, then an infant institution, recognized its merits and desired to become possessed of it. Etty, however, wanted £500, a small price enough, but one too big for the Scottish Academy to pay. After much negotiation, however, he agreed to accept three hundred guineas from the Scottish Academy on condition that he should be allowed to paint two pendants to the "Judith" at a hundred guineas each. This offer the canny Scotch council promptly accepted, and ever since the "Judith" and its pendants have been the boast of their institution. In 1849, indeed, when these pictures were lent to the Society of Arts, they showed their appreciation of their

bargain by insuring the centre picture for £2,000, and the two pendants together for the same sum. It is said that they have refused to sell them for that sum, recognizing them, as a Scotch Academician has remarked, "as a source of power, progress, and prosperity."

It was not until after the painting of the "Judith," namely, in 1828, when he was forty-one years of age, that he at last received the long-desired distinction of election to the Royal Academy. All the clever young artists who began their artistic career with him in the Academy Schools had long ago been made Academicians, and the fame of many of them was now setting instead of rising. Poor Haydon was in the thickest of his struggle, just released from the Bench; Wilkie, newly returned from the long stay abroad which so materially affected his style of painting, was still at the height of his fame; Mulready and Leslie had painted some of their most popular works; and Hilton was keeper of the Royal Academy.

To all these the satisfaction of adding R.A. to their name had now become stale, but to Etty it was a subject of intense gratification, all the more, perhaps, from its having been so long delayed. He expresses his delight in his usual naïve, almost childish, manner, but no added dignity could make him give up his long practice of painting in the life-school. He had always been the most regular of students there, and he would rather, he declares, give up his membership than the life-school. "It fills up a couple of hours in the evening," he adds, "I should be at a loss how else to employ;" so he continued to attend the Academy schools almost to the end of his life.

In 1830 he had an exciting experience of a revolution during a short visit to Paris—three days of horrible street-fighting and lamp-smashing, during which our English artist quietly went on working in the Louvre, to an accompaniment of "the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry in the distance. But I put on a bit more colour," he adds, "and worked till about one." The next day the Louvre was attacked.

Etty's enthusiastic feeling for the splendid old minster of his native town has already been mentioned; his grief,

therefore, may be imagined when that minster was nearly destroyed by an incendiary fire in 1829. "My heart," he writes, "has been almost broken with this sad intelligence of our dear cathedral," and for some time most of his letters and vehement protestations are concerned with the preservation of the rood screen and other relics of antiquity which reckless innovators proposed to destroy. In this same year also he lost his dear mother, and his simple, affectionate heart is well seen in the letters he writes about her death to his brother and niece. It seems a pity that a heart so gentle and kind should always have been rejected by the fair ladies to whom he was constantly offering it; but probably by this time he was too fixed in his old bachelor habits, and too devoted to life-schools, &c., to have settled into happy married life. Besides, he had been now for some years comfortably settled in a house in Buckingham Street, Strand, where his young niece, who suited him probably far better than any wife would have done, was his considerate companion, housekeeper, and "right hand." Here, under her care, the crotchety old bachelor was made thoroughly happy, and here some of his most important works were accomplished. After the "Judith" we find coming next in date of exhibition the great picture of "Benaiah," one of David's captains; and then "Hero and Leander," "Venus and Cupid descending," "The Storm," "Judith going forth," "Candaules," now in the National Gallery, "The Dancer," "Window in Venice," "Sabrina," "Youth at the Prow and Pleasure at the Helm," in the National Gallery, "The Destroying Angels and Demons of Evil interrupting the Orgies of the Vicious and Intemperate," a finished sketch, "The Lute-player," "The Dangerous Playmate," "Hylas and the Nymphs," "The Persian," "The Cardinal," "Nymph and Young Faun dancing," repetition of "The Lute-player," "Venus and her Satellites," "The Bridge of Sighs," "Phædra and Cymockles on the Idle Lake," "Wood-nymphs sleeping," "A Magdalen," "Venus and her Doves," "A Family of the Forests," "Psyche laying her Casket at the Feet of Venus," "Adam and Eve at their Morning Orisons," "Mars, Venus, and Cupid," "Samson betrayed

by Delilah," "The Sirens and Ulysses," "The Good Samaritan," "Cupid's Bivouac," "The Prodigal Son," "Il Duetto," "A Bacchante," "Waters of Elle," "Diana and Endymion," "Pluto and Proserpine," "The Little Mariner," "Mars and Venus," a large subject from the "Parable of the Ten Virgins," "The Prodigal's Return," "Female Bathers surprised by a Swan," "David," "The Little Brunette," "Two of the Modern Time," "One of the Olden Time," "Cupid and Psyche," "On the Thames," "Bathers," sketch for a large picture of "Christ blessing little Children," originally intended for St. Margaret's Church, Brighton, "The Graces," "The Bather," "The Entombment," "In the Greenwood Shade," "Flemish Courtship," "Venus and Cupid," "View of the Stid, Bolton Abbey," "The Backbiter," "Live while you Live," "Hesperus," "Eve at the Fountain," "Fair Rosamond," "Aurora and Zephyr," "The Indian alarmed," "Flower Girl," "A Votive Offering," "Circe," "The Choice of Paris," "The Grape-gathering," and many others, besides his great and last epic, the "Joan of Arc," a colossal effort, which cost the painter, who was now getting an old man, worn with asthma and constant cough, more struggle and difficulty than could well be imagined. He bore up, however, inspired by his heroine, through "weather, asthma, and cough, all in triple league against him," until at length the three colossal subjects left his studio to take their chance in the world, and the painter went to Westminster Abbey to return thanks for their completion.

The "Joan of Arc" series was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1847, and was bought by Messrs. Colls, Wethered, and Wass for £2,500 *paid down*, an astounding price for a picture at that time. The work was exhibited afterwards in the provinces, with a short description of the subject written by Etty.

After this triumph, which, greater than any he could have imagined in his youth, came to him, however, only when his constitution was too shaken to enjoy it with the old zest, Etty seems to have felt that his work as a painter of historic themes was over, and for the two remaining

years of his life he only occupied himself with slight and fanciful sketches. At the same time, also, he determined to put into execution a long-meditated plan of retiring to his beloved York for the rest of his days. He therefore gave up, not without regret, his position of Visitor of the Academy Schools, and resigned his place at the Council Board of the School of Design, where he had served, he says, "as many years as Jacob served to obtain a wife," and bought a comfortable old-fashioned house in Coney Street, in the centre of York, looking on the Ouse as his house in London had looked on the Thames. Here, in June, 1848, he removed from London with his niece and all his household goods and some thousands of pictures, studies, copies, casts, books, old armour, and all the paraphernalia of an artist, and settled down in the old city just half a century after he had left it to begin his battle with the world in a printer's office at Hull.

But the battle, with all its late victories, was now well-nigh over. One other recognition, however, awaited him which must have given him great pleasure. In June, 1849, a loan exhibition of as many of his works as could be collected was opened at the rooms of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi, and the result was a great success. "This exhibition," writes his biographer Gilchrist, "at once established Etty's fame on a footing it had never before attained, and left his enduring claims no longer doubtful. For mere fame it did more than twenty years of silent labour had effected." And he himself says, "The effect astonished all. Nobody seemed to expect what there awaited them. It was triumphant. I am thankful to Almighty God that He has spared me to see that day."

It is pleasant to think of the kind old painter, who had struggled so perseveringly in his early days against difficulty, discouragement, and want of genius, going to his rest in this bright halo of success and self-satisfaction. How different to his first encourager, Haydon, for whom the struggle had eventually proved too hard, and who had shortly before, "beaten but not conquered," as he phrases it, died by his own hand.

Death came gently to Etty soon after he returned to

York from this exciting exhibition in London. He died on the 13th of November, 1849, in his sixty-third year, after but a few days' serious illness, though for many years his health had been failing, and his symptoms gradually growing worse. His wish was to have been buried in York Minster, but as he had failed to set aside the necessary fees for this in his will, this last honour was not accorded him. He had amassed a considerable fortune by the time of his death, the bulk of which he left to his beloved brother Walter, who had aided him so generously in his early days; but he, who was ten years older than Etty, only survived him for three months. His niece inherited his house in York and £200 a year. It is rarely that a painter by his own unaided exertions has been able to leave so much property behind him.

Of Etty's art it is difficult for me to speak, for I own I wholly fail to appreciate it. His colouring is crude, glaring, and often vulgar; his flesh-tones have none of the rich warmth of the Venetian masters, who seemed to see the blood pulsating beneath the skin, and his drawing is constantly defective. From first to last, indeed, it seems to me that Etty was scarcely more than a clever and diligent Academy student, who made the drawing from the live model the end and not the means of his art.

His love of the nude was, indeed, a passion, and this from no tendency to sensuality either in his life or art, but simply because he devoted himself to art for art's sake. He achieved, it must be confessed, a greater knowledge of the nude human body than any other painter of his time, but his grandest efforts appear weak and tawdry if we once come to compare them with the works of any of the great masters of old who made flesh-painting their especial study. Take, for instance, a painting by Paris Bordone or Palma Vecchio, not to speak of Titian and Correggio, and set it beside one by Etty, and the difference not only in colouring but in the whole understanding of the subject will at once become apparent. It was, indeed, mere painting of surface with Etty, with no subtlety of life and movement. He gives himself his method of proceeding: "Resolution. First night, correctly draw and outline the

figure only. Second night, carefully paint in the figure with black and white and Indian red, for instance. The next, having secured with copal, glaze, and then scumble in the bloom, glaze into shadows, and touch on the lights carefully, and it is done."

It is to be feared that Etty trusted too much to such recipes for producing his pictures. He had a facile execution and great skill of hand, an intense admiration rather than perception of colour, but he wanted the brain to be a truly great painter.

In person, according to Redgrave, Etty was "short and thick-set, with somewhat massive features, deeply scarred with small-pox, a face expressive of great benevolence, and a head large—disproportionately large indeed—but tending to a look of power. Slow in speech, and slow and measured in action, rather increased in late years by an asthmatic affection, of a kindly and gentle nature, and of extreme simplicity of character." Add to this that he was a thorough Conservative in politics, classing the Reform Bill and the cholera together as the "two great evils of the day," and we have a tolerably correct likeness of the painter William Etty.

CHARLES LOCK EASTLAKE.

CHARLES LOCK EASTLAKE is an artist whose name will always be gratefully remembered in the annals of English art, although his actual achievement in the way of painting was not, perhaps, very remarkable. He was the son of Mr. George Eastlake, a solicitor to the Admiralty in Plymouth, and was born in that town on the 17th of November, 1793.

His father was a man of good understanding and cultivated taste, who seems to have bestowed great care on the education of his four sons, all of whom turned out men of ability in one way or another. Charles was the youngest of the four,—so much the younger, indeed, that his eldest brother, William, was almost like a second father to him.

He received his first instruction at the grammar school at Plymouth, and was afterwards sent to the one at Plympton, where Sir Joshua was educated; but the most important part of his education was carried on under the kindly influences of home, and it was in the society of his father, mother, and three brothers that his mental powers were stimulated, without undue forcing being applied in any particular direction.

He does not seem, like most of our artists, to have manifested any precocious talent in the way of art. There are no stories told of his baby achievements in drawing; but he learnt drawing when quite a boy, and that from no common master, for it was the delightful water-colour painter, Samuel Prout, also a native of Plymouth, who gave him his first lessons; and we may infer that he must have shown some aptitude in this direction, or his father would hardly have procured him this teaching. He learnt

French also more readily than most boys, acting on one occasion, when he was only about ten years old, in a French play that was performed in the Plymouth Assembly Rooms.

For poetry, likewise, he showed an early taste, writing verses in the approved style of Pope and Gray, some of which, communicated by Lady Eastlake, are published in a short biography by Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse. Altogether he was a clever, well-trained lad, of whom his parents might well be proud, but who was, perhaps, in danger of becoming a little too priggish in the rarefied intellectual atmosphere which he was required to breathe at home. His father, therefore, wisely determined to send him to a large public school, where his talents would be likely to find their level; and, accordingly, in 1808, when he was fifteen years old, he was sent to London to the Charter House, from whence he writes somewhat disconsolately to his mother, that he has been put without examination into a lower class, called the "Shell," where he is obliged to fag for the upper boys, "precluding the possibility of studying." "At times," he continues, "I look forward to melancholy prospects; but I daresay I shall soon be comfortable. The thing is, I am now undergoing a change from what you called the Mathematician and Philosopher to the school-boy." And not a bad change for this wise young gentleman, as he himself is philosopher enough to admit. He did not endure it long, however,—the whole system of a public school was utterly repugnant to his refined, sensitive nature; and, after having given it a sufficient trial, we find him writing the following letter to his father:—

"Gloucester Street"
[His brother William's lodgings],
"21 Dec., 1808.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

'You will at first be doubtless greatly surprised at the contents of this letter; but I hope you will both peruse it and judge of it seriously.

"In the first place, it is necessary to inform you that my profession is unalterably fixed—it is that of an histo-

rical painter. My enthusiastic propensity for it, my ardent desire to begin my studies, and my future reputation as a painter, require that I should leave the Charter House immediately. Though as to leaving it literally immediately, I myself do not wish it, as (were I to come away this vacation) I should have a quarter to pay and receive no benefit from it in the classical way; but at the end of these holidays I would give notice of quitting at Easter. To this there are, I know, objections. First, that I should sacrifice all improvement in the classics—that I should lose the chance of forming connections that would be afterwards serviceable to me in life—that I should not have been there long enough to derive any advantage from the noise and bustle of a public school—and lastly, that I should have paid eight guineas entrance for so short a time. I answer thus. The improvement I have made in the classics at the Charter House this last quarter has certainly been something, but the improvement I have made under Mr. Jones now in three days, for an hour a day, is as much as I should there make in three weeks, and William is satisfied by Mr. Jones's arguments that I should learn twice as much by myself as I should at such a school. As to connections, if there are any worth forming, and there are very few if any, it would be among the Gownboys, and they live in a separate house: so that it is next to impossible to be intimate with them.

"As to gaining a knowledge of the world from the noise and bustle of a public school, the Academy is the place for that, and Haydon, in his impetuous way, has offered to introduce me there directly, but all in good time.

"Then as to the last objection" (the eight guineas entrance), "I am under no apprehension that my dear father will think that the least obstacle to my quitting the school, and the object I am in pursuit of would be more than a sufficient excuse to the masters for my so doing. . . . William thinks I should first come down and study the sciences at Plymouth; but whatever are my studies in addition to painting, London (to use William's own words) is the field for action. . . . . Under these

considerations I should hope my dear father will not hesitate in making me happy. George has only told you the *tricks*, William will tell you the *vices* of the school I am at; and if he does not regret sending me there, he confesses that it will be a miracle, if during my stay I get into no scrapes. I am persuaded you think me proof against the various depravities I allude to, but to use your own memorable expression, 'Gutta cavat lapidem non vi sed sæpe cadendo.' The vices I daily witness are more than '*Guttas*,' and perhaps I am not equal to a '*Lapidem*.' But why should I endeavour to influence your mind thus? I have one argument stronger than any, which is that the happiness of your youngest son (whom I am persuaded you love) is called in question. I am sure you will not check the ardour of my mind—indeed, I never knew what it was to like a profession till now.

"I need only add that William acquiesces in your decision, whatever it may be, or, in other words, that I only wait for your answer to ratify and confirm my fate. Recollect, my dear father, that my happiness or misery now depends upon you . . . . I wish I could think on anything stronger to convey to your mind an idea of the anguish (for it is more than solicitude) I feel while expecting your answer. But when I consider your kindness I fondly anticipate the result. Above all, I must remind you that this is not the effect of the mere ebullitions of a fervent imagination—it is an irresistible propensity which will remain (if not untimely nipt) for ever.

"And when I cease to be a painter I almost cease to live.

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"C. EASTLAKE."

This eminently reasonable letter, which I quote here at length, because it is so thoroughly characteristic of the boy who was certainly father to the man in this, that even at fifteen, "he reasoned on all he did," had its due effect upon his father, who immediately removed him from the Charter House, and placed him with Haydon, who was then beginning, with high hope and noble determination,

his sad struggle with life and art in London. Haydon with his careless habits, reckless improvidence, and personal vanity does not seem to have been quite the sort of guide, philosopher, and friend that one might have expected such a sensible young student as Eastlake to have chosen, but he was his fellow-townsman, and he probably knew no other artist in London. Besides, Haydon's enthusiasm was of a nature to set a young heart aflame with talk of high art, and all its achievements in the past, and possible achievements in the future. He was just then finishing his great picture of "Dentatus," which he believed would take the town by storm; and young Eastlake doubtless shared in his belief. He does not seem, however, to have ever been led astray by Haydon's impetuosity. His judgment was, indeed, already far too sound, and his principle too high for Haydon's influence to have much power over him; and, finally, Haydon borrowing money of him which was never returned, a slight coolness arose between them. Haydon went on venturing and losing one bold stroke after another, while his sensible pupil quietly crept up and won renown.

The first step was his admission into the Antique School of the Royal Academy, which he gained by a drawing of the back view of the Discobolus, in March, 1809, three months after he had announced to his father his determination to be a painter. He was admitted to the Life School in the following December; and, in April, 1810, gained the silver medal of the Society of Arts.

About the same time, when he was still only seventeen years old, he received his first commission for a painting. This was from Mr. Jeremiah Harman, the banker, who on seeing some of his drawings, suggested that he should execute an oil-painting on the subject of the man possessed with demons coming out of the tombs. Eastlake, however, preferred a classical subject, and took much trouble in preparing for it, but this was afterwards abandoned, and that of the "Raising of Jairus' Daughter" chosen instead.

All during this student-time in London he worked with unremitting application, drawing from the Elgin Marbles, attending Sir Charles Bell's lectures on anatomy, and

endeavouring to master thoroughly the principles of painting. "I rise early," he says in a letter to his brother, "and sometimes draw before breakfast in my own rooms. At half-past nine I go to the Academy and draw till 5; from 5 to 6 dine and take a walk; from 6 to 8 at the Academy again. Then from 8 to 12 Latin, Greek, and drawing." "I should as soon think of reading a novel in the middle of the day," he says in another place, "as of writing a letter." He did, however, sometimes allow himself a little relaxation or dissipation as he considered it, but even then, as his wife remarks, "not without a moral, and a quotation," and principally because he considered relaxation a duty. "*Utile dulce*" is his excusing motto for going to the Opera occasionally, though lest he should be thought extravagant, he tells his mother that he never goes unless he gets an order, and "then only on Saturday, when the labour of the week is over." He is always careful to deprecate any apparent extravagance, and once when he owns that he has been spending too much, he explains the manner in which his money has been laid out, and that it has all been applied without a single exception to the furtherance of his art and intellectual improvement, adding: "I have been too fond of considering myself an intellectual desperado, and as such too much in the habit of thinking the acquisition of that lawful which the caprice of the moment may have deemed necessary to rouse emulation." This he admits to have been wrong, but contends that "this species of extravagance is pardonable, inasmuch as it arises less from want of principle than want of care." And henceforward, not even "care" is wanting. His "*intensity of conscientiousness*," as Lady Eastlake well calls it, is one of the chief points in his character.

In the April of 1814, Eastlake gave himself a little more relaxation than was his wont, for without even a moral or a quotation, and almost as it would seem on a sudden freak, he and a fellow-lodger took a little trip to Calais at the time when Louis the Eighteenth was returning to France. Although the principal luggage of the young travellers consisted of "white cockades" it was evidently more the fun of the adventure than any political sympathies that

took them across the channel, and this fun and the entire novelty of the scene they seem to have thoroughly enjoyed, even the sober young Eastlake entering into it heartily, and writing quite a lively account of it all to his family. His funds did not then permit of his going on to Paris, but in January, 1815, directly after the peace, he matured a plan for going there to study the great works in painting that Buonaparte's spoliations had collected in the Louvre. It was Mr. Harman, who had, as we have seen, commissioned his first work (a picture already finished and exhibited at the British Institution), who gave him the necessary help for this undertaking, and who moreover gave him introductions which were of great service. Napoleon's return from Elba, however, interfered with his studies, as it did with more important events, and the young artist had to pack up his white cockades and get away with the rest of the English from Paris.

He did not, however, leave until the 19th of March, on the same evening that Louis XVIII., whom he had accompanied to Calais on his triumphal return, took flight from the Tuileries. Afterwards, when Napoleon was brought to England, Eastlake, who was then staying with his family at Plymouth, contrived to take his portrait as he stood on the deck of the "Bellerophon." The whole world was then in a furious state of excitement regarding this great prisoner, and Eastlake's portrait taken at this critical moment met with immense success, and at once made the painter notorious. It was nothing remarkable in the way of art, but it was a good likeness of the caged lion, with his uniform and decorations, also painted from the life, for they had been sent on shore for the painter's service. Five Plymouth gentlemen commissioned a large repetition of it, which was exhibited in London and all over the provinces, and brought the painter not only fame, but £1,000 in solid cash.[1]

This fortunate chance, for it was really no more, enabled

[1] This picture is said by Wornum to be now in the possession of the Marquis of Lansdowne, though Lady Eastlake does not appear to have been able to trace it. The smaller original picture is still in the possession of Lady Eastlake. It was engraved for the "Art Journal" in 1848.

Eastlake to fulfil his great desire of going to Italy. His classical reading, and his study of Greek architecture had long been directed towards this object, and now he further prepared himself for profiting by it to the utmost, by learning Italian. After all this was done, and with a mind so stuffed with classical lore that he is obliged to remind himself that he "must travel as a painter, and not as an antiquary," he started for Rome in the September of 1816, meaning, it would seem, in the first instance only to spend about a year in Italy, though his stay abroad ultimately extended over fourteen years with only short intervals for home visits.

During this long period, from 1816 to 1830, he travelled through Italy, Greece, France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, and Belgium—always, however, making Rome his head-quarters, a city made delightful to him by its classic associations, its magnificent art, and all the charms of its life and society. "A Roman Spring!" he writes, "you can conceive nothing too delightful for it. The sun and the Fine Arts are the sources of most of the impressions one receives. I have no longer any doubt about the effect of climate; and everything one sees in the street, even the handbills, have something to do with art . . . . And who does one know in this fairy city? Who are to me its inhabitants? The learned, the tasteful, the polite, and the beautiful. Ought I not to be happy?" Such were his impressions of Rome during his first year of residence, nor did they alter with further acquaintance. All his letters tell of the pleasure he received from the classic associations, the beautiful scenery, and artistic influences with which he was surrounded. But not content with the classic air of Rome, his passion for architecture and archæological research led him in March, 1818, to travel to Greece; then a much more adventurous expedition than it is now. He started with the well-known architect Sir Charles Barry, (then Mr. Barry), Mr. Kinnaird, also an architect, and Mr. Johnson, afterwards professor at Haileybury, for his companions, and had a most delightful trip, in spite of fears of the plague, which was causing a "horrible sort of suspense" in Athens when they arrived. Eastlake and his companions,

however, boldly entered the infected city, and when "once they saw the Parthenon and Temple of Theseus, the plague was no longer thought of." His journal, kept during his travels in Greece, and published in Lady Eastlake's "Memoir," gives a good picture of the state of the country at this time, and also of the brigandage which then existed to a frightful extent in Italy as well as Greece. He remained three months and a half in Athens, and during some weeks of his stay was the only Englishman in the city. "My life," he says, "was during this time every day alike, so that the only journal I kept was not in black and white, but in blue, red, and yellow."

A number of travellers, however, soon after arrived in one of the English men-of-war, and under the auspices of Lord and Lady Ruthven two balls were given, "chiefly to bring out the Maid of Athens and her sister," whom Eastlake affirms "were not remarkably beautiful, but interesting and ladylike."

By the end of the year 1818, we find Eastlake back again in Rome, after a nine months' absence, having brought with him as a result of his tour ninety oil sketches, many of them comparatively finished works. He was now twenty-five years of age, a distinguished painter, a fine scholar, an admirable critic, an adventurous traveller, and most accomplished gentleman, whose mind, writes Mr. Monkhouse, "not only from its contentment, but from its varied powers and stores of learning, was truly a continual feast."

Yet with all this, what was his actual achievement in the way of art? The list is a long and sad one of the young painters who have gone to Rome with burning desire for fame, who with high hope, and small means, have flung themselves into some mighty work which they fondly believed would bring them immortal fame, but whereon after they had spent all their strength and resources the world looked but coldly, or did not look at all, leaving them in the bitterest discouragement, either to regird their loins for fresh effort, or, as many have done, to die martyrs, as they fondly deemed, in the cause of art. The life of one such artist, who found Rome a cruel experience, is recorded in these pages; and it is curious to contrast poor David

Scott's view of the seven-hilled city taken from his solitary chamber, where he sat alone with his huge canvas, "neither singing nor making any noise," as his landlady complained, with that of the prosperous Eastlake, whose society was courted by all the rank, beauty, and intellect then assembled in the Capital.

Yet it may be, if we were to take actual worth rather than success as the measure of artistic work, there might have been found many among the struggling artists in Rome, of whom society took no note, who were capable of greater things than this accomplished young Eastlake, whose "varied powers and stores of learning" were probably obstacles to that singleness of devotion and enthusiasm we generally find in all great painters. Eastlake's taste was excellent, his judgment sound, his knowledge accurate, and his hand perfectly skilful; how is it, then, that his works "drop groundward" without one spark of divine fire to vivify their tame contentment? Eastlake truly might have said with Andrea del Sarto in Browning's poem:—

> "All is silver-grey,
> Placid and perfect with my art—the worse!
> I know both what I want and what might gain—
> And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
> Had I been two, another and myself,
> Our head would have o'erlook'd the world. No doubt."

I somehow fancy that Eastlake, with his high reasoning powers, and his accurate appreciation of other men's work, knew all this about himself as well as anyone, and that it was simply because he did not feel himself capable of producing any soul-stirring work that he went on painting, not "Virgins, Babes, and Saints," but Contadinas, peasants, and bandits, with wearisome repetition. Another reason was, that commissions for these pretty subjects, and also for sketches of the localities round about, flowed in upon him without number, so that he writes, "he needed ten pair of hands instead of one to get through his work." It is true that at times he seems to have had to reason away some qualms of conscience for renouncing historical painting, or "that union of history and landscape" of which he had

at first dreamed; but conscience was quieted by the reflection, that "historical painting merely was too hazardous, for when a young man," he writes to his mother, "has made himself a bankrupt in strenuously aiming to produce something tolerable, to be at the mercy of such ignorant puppies as the (naming an English paper)—is not to be borne." So he went on deliberately in the groove into which he had fallen, doing the work that came to him and making his art pay, which few young artists were able to do. His industry and regularity were noted among his fellow artists, and he even ventured to stay and work in Rome during the heats of summer, finding that by economizing his time and strength by sleeping during the hottest part of the day, he could do so without harm. Though painting thus constantly, he does not seem to have been in any hurry to gain popularity. His works were chiefly confined to sketches of scenery in Italy and Greece, "I have acquired," he writes to his brother, "a desperate fondness for nature, and have added much to my happiness by following landscape painting." In 1823, however, he sent besides three views of Rome to the Royal Academy, several paintings of banditti subjects to the British Institution, which achieved a marked success. They might have been sold fifty times over, it is stated, at the Private View, and at almost any price, only they were all commissioned by visitors to Rome.

In 1825 Eastlake departed for once from his usual style and subjects, by painting for the Duke of Devonshire a scene from Plutarch's "Life of Agesilaus," wherein Isadas the young Spartan hero is represented rushing naked into battle, and is mistaken for a god. This picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1827, and won him great applause. It led to his being elected an Associate in the following November, almost the only instance of a painter being elected while an absentee.

In 1828, he exhibited what is perhaps his best-known picture, "Pilgrims arriving in sight of Rome," [1] a work of refined sentiment and grace of composition, of which

[1] Engraved by G. T. Doo, R.A., and by G. W. Sharpe for the "Art Journal."

he painted four repetitions varying slightly one from another, besides two long decorative pictures of the same subject for panels at Bowood.

This picture and the landscape called "Lord Byron's Dream," now in the National Collection, gained him, in 1830, the full honours of the Royal Academy; and he now felt that he owed it to the position he had attained to return to England, and reside in London. He did this unwillingly, not knowing, as he expressed it to Mr. Harman, "how his historical or poetical dreams could be realized there." Before settling in London, however, he again visited Venice, to take a last look at the part of Italy that interested him most; and then travelled on to Vienna, where, following his usual custom, he made careful critical notes of all the pictures worth studying—as he had before done in the galleries of Germany and Holland—notes of the utmost value in his after criticisms.

He was just thirty-seven years of age when he came to London, where he was welcomed by friends old and new, and found the London world, as he had done the Roman one, open to his "Sesame."

His reputation, indeed, not only as a painter, but as an authority in matters of art, had preceded him; and he was offered several public appointments, in which his knowledge would have been serviceable. These, however, he for some time steadfastly declined, considering that a painter had no time to spare away from his art. He nevertheless took a lively interest in the promotion of art culture, aided in the formation of the schools of design, and was a member of the Useful Knowledge Society, founded by Lord Brougham in 1833. All his influence was exerted at the time of the great sale of Sir Thomas Lawrence's collection, to induce the Government to secure his magnificent collection of drawings for the nation; but in this, unfortunately, he was not successful, though he afterwards saved the trustees of the National Gallery from making a mistake with regard to a supposed work by Raphael.

During the ten years after his return to London—that is from 1830 to 1840—Eastlake painted comparatively but

few fresh pictures. His two well-known works in the National Collection—"The Escape of Francesco di Carrara, Lord of Padua, and his Wife, Taddea d'Este," a scene from Sismondi's "Italian Republics," and "Gaston de Foix before the Battle of Ravenna," a subject also drawn from Sismondi's graphic work—belong, however, to this time, together with various portraits and repetitions, and two feeble conventional renderings of Scripture subjects—"Christ Blessing Little Children," and the picture in the National Gallery of "Christ Lamenting over Jerusalem."

But though this was about all he accomplished in the way of painting, he was now beginning to be occupied with the literature as well as the practice of art, and had already published several noteworthy articles in the "Penny Cyclopædia," and elsewhere. In 1840 he further distinguished himself as a writer on art by a review of Passavant's "Raphael," which appeared in the "Quarterly Review." In the same year, also, he brought out his translation of Göthe's "Theory of Colours;" and, in 1841, he edited the first English edition of Kugler's "Handbook of Painting," which has proved such a useful text-book for the English student. A fourth edition of it was published in 1874, thoroughly revised by Lady Eastlake. His most important work as a writer, however, was undoubtedly his "Materials for a History of Oil Painting," published in 1847, in which is condensed all the carefully collected knowledge gained during his long residence abroad, and by his studies in most of the galleries of Europe.

One other labour besides these literary efforts occupied Eastlake at this time. This was entailed by the position he had accepted of secretary to the Fine Arts Commission, of which the late Prince Consort was the chairman. This developed in him, says his wife, "latent energies and capacities of which he had himself been unconscious. The Commission found that, in addition to a secretary, furnished with unusual stores of learning, they had obtained the services of one endowed with a singular aptitude for that accurate and multifarious work called 'business.'" The royal chairman evidently appreciated his accomplished

secretary, and discussed all the objects and plans of the Commission with him.

When the Cartoon Exhibition was open in Westminster Hall, in July, 1843, the public thronged to see this result of a great national undertaking which caused much discussion in its day, and in which, as we have seen, so many of our artists took part. Eastlake sent in no cartoon; but he seems to have managed the whole affair, and writes about it thus:—

"The daily throng is immense" (this was during the fortnight that the public were admitted free), "and the strongest proof is thus given of the love of the lower orders for *pictures* when they represent an event. I abridged the catalogue to a penny size for the million, but many of the most wretchedly dressed people prefer the sixpenny one with the quotations; and it is a very gratifying sight to witness the attention and earnestness with which they follow the subject with the books in their hand. Ten thousand of the sixpenny catalogues have been sold. The higher classes complained that the exhibition was not open longer for a shilling; but the Commissioners have wisely determined to let it remain for the public as at present, and for several weeks to come. Clerks of counting-houses have petitioned to be let in on Sundays; but this cannot be granted. The gates are closed from time to time when the Hall is full, and the people are let out through the Law Courts. Meanwhile the new-comers collect in crowds, waiting for admission, and carriages draw up subject to the same necessary delay. No possible arrangement, and no number of hands could regulate the delivery of umbrellas and sticks, and the unclaimed ones accumulate. I have, therefore, directed the doorkeepers to use their discretion, and let in many with their umbrellas. The question of dress I settled, of course, without any line of demarcation; only children are not let in under a certain apparent age. They are nevertheless carried in with the throng, and as the policemen collect them they are walked out again in droves, and packed for a time in the vestibule till there is room to get out. All the workmen from the Houses of Parliament go in, but chiefly in the

evening, because, being as white as millers, they have the discretion to time their visits."

I quote this letter, not only as affording a proof of what Lady Eastlake affirms concerning her husband's business capabilities, but also because it gives a graphic contemporary account of an exhibition of which we have frequently heard in these pages.

It is no wonder certainly that the painter's note-book shows fewer entries of pictures from 1840 to 1850, "yet," writes his biographer, "his 'Hagar and Ishmael,' 'Helvise,' 'Visit to the Nun,' 'Helena,' etc., bear evidence that the inspirations of beauty were not fading from his mental sight." In 1850 another was added to the many honours that had accrued to the sensible young lad whom we saw writing to his father concerning his "irresistible propensity" to become a painter. In the August of this year, on the death of Sir Martin Archer Shee, he was made President of the Royal Academy, receiving on the occasion the usual honour of knighthood. Always intensely conscientious in the discharge of duty, sparing himself no labour, and conciliating rich and poor by his real goodness of heart and charming tact of manner, Eastlake was perhaps the most fitting man for President that the Academy had ever found, at all events since Sir Joshua. The first year of his Presidentship was that of the great Exhibition of 1851, of which he had been one of the twenty-six commissioners. Arduous indeed must have been his work at this time. President of the Royal Academy, Fellow of the Royal Society, Royal Commissioner, soon after Director of the National Gallery, and many other things besides, his judgment was constantly being claimed on one point or another, and never, it would seem, without its being wisely given. It was by his means chiefly that the National Gallery first assumed a true importance, for it was during his directorship that the Parliament voted an annual sum for the purchase of pictures, which was so judiciously expended by him that some of the greatest treasures in our national collection were gained in consequence. "Eastlake is always admirable," writes a friend, "through good and

evil report. His Presidency is invaluable—earnest, steady, most judicious, businesslike, kind, full of tact, consideration, and even policy, but of an honest and wholly unselfish policy, and, when need be, bold, as backed by honesty."

It was not until 1849 that Sir Charles Eastlake married, but he found in the wife he then chose an admirable helper and sympathizer in all his labours. Lady Eastlake was the daughter of Dr. Rigby, a physician of Norwich, who has before been mentioned as the first employer of "Old" Crome. Miss Rigby had before her marriage become known as the author of "Letters from the Baltic," and since that time she has published several works relating to art, both original and translations. Her memoir of Sir Charles Eastlake prefixed to the second series of his "Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts," is written with a taste and discretion rarely displayed in such works. One would like, it is true, to gain a little more insight into the real feelings of the artist of whom she writes, a little personal acquaintance with the man himself, but in these days of babbling biography, we may be thankful for a little reticence, and Lady Eastlake presents us with a picture of her husband that is almost as "placid and perfect" as his art.

During the last ten years of Eastlake's life his office of Director of the National Gallery obliged him to travel again. He now gave up painting altogether, and year after year, with his wife for a companion, went to Italy in quest of treasure-trove for the nation. Once also he went as far as Spain, and often to France, Holland, and Germany.

But his health, never very strong, was now failing. He frequently, however, returned from his foreign journeys invigorated in body as well as mind, and everybody hoped that this would be the case when he set out for his last foreign tour in 1865. The air of Italy did at first seem to revive him, but on reaching Milan he became seriously ill, and after some sad months spent there and at Pisa, he died in the latter city on the 24th of October, 1865, aged seventy-

three. He was buried first in the English cemetery at Florence, but afterwards, at the wish of the Royal Academy, his body was conveyed to England and buried at Kensal Green, Lady Eastlake refusing a public funeral at St. Paul's as not being consonant with his wishes.

CLARKSON STANFIELD.

STANFIELD has been characterized by Ruskin as "the leader of the English realists," and in truth a plain, honest realism is the chief quality of his art. He never attempts to poetize about nature, or to set the facts he tells us in a subjective light, but is content to note—

> "The beauty and the wonder and the power,
> The shapes of things, their colours, lights, and shades,
> Changes, surprises"—

without endeavouring to

> "Add soul, and heighten them threefold."

He did not in fact trouble about soul, nor as Goethe puts it, "think much about thinking." He was not oppressed, like Turner, by the sadness and mystery of the earth; its painful riddles did not perplex him, nor its beauty fill him with soft delight. Yet though he did not regard Nature in the self-centred mood that poets mostly delight in, and that has perhaps found its highest expression in Wordsworth's "Excursion," he nevertheless loved her with a genuine, hearty love, full of obedience and simple faith, but entirely unreasoning and unsentimental. His pictures affect us in much the same manner as do the blithe old sea-songs of former days. We hear the winds roar and the waters dash in them, and as we watch the well-rigged ships tossing on the billows, or entering the peaceful harbour, we feel animated by the proud British sentiment that "Britannia rules the waves." For Stanfield's art—although by no means confined to British scenes, he having painted foreign shores and foreign seas more often perhaps than English ones—is yet intensely national and patriotic.

His early training had probably much to do with this. He was born at Sunderland, in Durham, in 1793. His

father, James Stanfield, was the author of an "Essay on Biography," and also a writer of verse, but he brought up his son, who was named Clarkson, after Thomas Clarkson, the Negro Emancipatist, as a sailor, and the young lad made several voyages to China and back before it was discovered that painting the sea and not navigating it was his true vocation.

So little is known of Stanfield's early life that I cannot find whether a taste for painting had been developed in him before he went to sea; but a fall from the rigging by which the young sailor severely injured his foot, first led him to turn his attention to painting as a means of support.

Before this time, however, it would seem that he had already distinguished himself by his nautical sketches, for in the life of Douglas Jerrold, it is stated that when Jerrold was serving on board the "Namur" guard-ship, then lying at the Nore, young Stanfield was also there, and his artistic powers were constantly put to service in painting scenes for the numerous theatrical entertainments got up by the officers on board; entertainments at which the fair-haired young middy and future play-writer Douglas Jerrold, usually acted as managing director.

Probably it was this theatrical employment while he was still a sailor that led Stanfield to adopt this style of art when he quitted the service. Like his friend Roberts his first efforts were devoted to scene-painting, and we find him about 1818 busily engaged in painting nautical views at the Old Royalty Theatre, a favourite resort of sailors. From thence he went to the "Coburg," and in 1821 journeyed to Edinburgh, where he first made the acquaintance of David Roberts. Roberts was then painting for Mr. Murray at the Theatre Royal, and Stanfield got engaged at a rival theatre—the Pantheon, then under the management of Barrymore. The two young men—Stanfield was twenty-seven at the time, and Roberts three years younger—engaged in such similar pursuits, soon struck up a friendship, which was continued without any break throughout life. Stanfield's superior attainments in painting were viewed with the deepest admiration, un-

mixed with any feeling of jealousy, by Roberts, who had at this time no thought of becoming anything greater than a successful scene-painter. Stanfield, however, had already aspired, having sent in 1821 a picture to the Royal Academy, called a "River Scene," being a view of the White Mill at Thames Bank. He now encouraged Roberts to similar attempts, and they both sent several small oil pictures to the Edinburgh exhibition of 1822.

After a short sojourn in Edinburgh, Stanfield returned to London, and entered upon an engagement at Drury Lane, where for some time he and his friend Roberts, who, strange to say, had likewise received an engagement at the same theatre, continued working for some years, producing splendid panoramic views and Christmas pantomimes that deserved a more lasting glory than to serve merely for a season's display at a theatre.

Among other scenes that he painted at this time may be mentioned those to his former shipmate's popular play of the "Rent Day," which again brought him into contact with Douglas Jerrold. In all his scenes the effects lay in the beautiful landscape or seascape backgrounds that he loved to introduce, and he did more perhaps by these admired scenes towards educating the taste of the British public to appreciate landscape than even by the more strictly artistic works that he afterwards produced. It is said that while thus employed at the theatre he created, and afterwards painted out more scenic masterpieces than any other painter ever produced. His energy was something prodigious. When any scenery was wanted at short notice, he would live whole days in his painting-room, working incessantly. Numerous stories are told of his marvellous rapidity and ease of execution, and the London theatres certainly lost valuable adjuncts when he and David Roberts retired from them.

This they did at about the same time, indeed the careers of these two artists are so closely connected and so similar in success during their early London experiences that it is difficult to regard them apart. One of their achievements was painting conjointly two immense panoramas, that were exhibited, I believe, at the old Coliseum.

They were both married men at this time, and Stanfield was beginning to have a family springing up around him; therefore doubtless anything that brought grist to the mill was acceptable, though commissions for pictures do not seem ever to have been lacking.

Stanfield was one of the earliest members of the Society of British Artists, then just formed in Suffolk Street. He contributed to its very first exhibition, held in 1824, and continued for some years to send some of his works there. In 1827, however, he exhibited a noteworthy picture called "Market Boats on the Scheldt," at the British Institution, and this was followed in 1827 by his well-known "Wreckers off Fort Rouge," a picture that won for him the premium of £50 from the Institution. The success of these works, and of one called "The Calm," exhibited in 1827 at the Royal Academy, made him feel that he ought to work for more permanent fame than the theatre was likely to afford, and about 1829 he gave up scene-painting as a profession, merely resuming his old practice now and then, as we shall see, to please his friends.

In 1830, in which year he exhibited his splendid picture of "Mount St. Michael, Cornwall," he greatly enlarged his experience by going abroad. He probably had visited the Continent before this, for, as before stated, we find as subjects for his pictures in 1826 and 1827 two foreign scenes; but now he appears to have made a more lengthy tour, though all record of it is wanting except that which can be found in his painted works. From these we learn that he must have journeyed into Italy, for besides a view of Strasburg and two paintings called "A Storm" and "The Fisherman of Honfleur," a "View of Venice" appeared in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1831. In 1832 he exhibited at the Academy (for which he had now deserted the British Artists) two pictures that had been commissioned by William IV.—"The Opening of New London Bridge" and "Portsmouth Harbour." He was made an Associate of the Royal Academy in the same year, and in 1835 a full Academician.

Stanfield's fame was now fully established, and though

his pictures did not sell for the large sums that David Roberts acquired by his effective sketches, he must from this time forth have made a good income, for he was a most industrious worker, and never a May came round, except in 1837 and 1838, that it did not find two or more paintings by him on the Academy walls. Altogether it is reckoned that he contributed 132 pictures to the Academy exhibitions during a period of thirty-nine years.

But though thus busily engaged, he seems from the glimpses we gain of him in several biographies of his distinguished friends, to have had plenty of time for amusement and pleasant social intercourse. He was eminently of a kindly, sociable disposition, and the position that had early thrown him among actors had likewise made him acquainted with some of the best writers and wits of that day. In particular "Stan," or "Stanny," as he is always familiarly called by Dickens and Roberts, was a constant guest in the Dickens household, where from biggest to least all seem to have loved him, and to have appreciated his imperturbable good humour. Especially when any little entertainment was going forward, Stan's services were always in requisition. From painting elaborate scenery to the performance of small conjuring tricks, he is ever willing to be made of use, and creates more merriment very often by his blunders than if he had accomplished his part in the most approved style.

We see him present at that delightful first reading of "The Chimes," that Dickens had travelled all the way from Italy in the winter time to accomplish, and the memory of which has been preserved to us in Maclise's admirable drawing. Here we see Stan and Mac sitting side by side in face of the excited author, and eagerly drinking in his charming story. Stanfield does not seem to have made any sketch of this scene, but he afterwards made three sketches for another of Dickens's Christmas books—"The Battle of Life." These three illustrations of dainty English landscape pleased Dickens greatly. "It is a delight to look at them," he writes; "how gentle and elegant, and yet how manly and vigorous they are. I have a perfect joy in them." The same vigorous and truthful and yet perfectly

refined style is visible in the numerous sketches of coast-scenery that he executed for Heath's "Annuals." They are all picturesque in treatment, but yet we do not feel that they are merely scenic representations got up for the purpose of looking pretty, as we often, it must be owned, feel with regard to his friend Roberts's brilliant sketches. But Stanfield, though his art has been accused of seeking theatrical display, was too earnest a student of nature ever to sacrifice truth to scenic effect. No doubt he sought such effects in nature, where they are often enough to be found, and painted them in preference to homelier charms; but he never invented them when they were not there, as Turner constantly did, setting his scenes in a light that never yet shone on sea or shore, but only in the poet-painter's mind. Stanfield's mind, as said before, was not poetic, but his chiaroscuro was admirable, and his knowledge of sea and sky and all the various influences acting upon them was beyond that of almost any other master. Even Ruskin, though blinded to the merits of most of our English landscape painters by his exclusive worship of one hero, admits Stanfield's excellence. "One work of Stanfield's," he writes, "alone presents us with as much concentrated knowledge of sea and sky, as diluted would have lasted any one of the old masters his life."

Here Ruskin, as is his wont, is unfair to the "old masters," by whom he means the Dutch landscapists, who were the great forerunners of our English school of landscape painters, and who still reigned supreme in the esteem of connoisseurs when Stanfield first began to paint. The real strength and originality of his art, lies, indeed, in the fact that he did not seek to imitate any of these Dutch masters, but from the first went direct to nature for instruction, refusing to look at her through their spectacles. Thus the title of the "English Vandervelde," that has been bestowed upon him in supposed compliment, has little meaning, for; if he painted the sea as well as Vandervelde, it was because he knew it as well, having studied it like him in all its moods—not because he had learnt the trick of representing it from Vandervelde's pictures. Nor was his knowledge of sky less remarkable than his knowledge of sea. Ruskin

calls him, "incomparably the noblest master of cloud-form of all our artists." "In fact," he says, in another place, "he is the only one among them who can draw a cloud." Ignoring Constable, it will be seen, altogether, though Constable took especial delight in cloud-drawing, and made it his especial study. Constable, however, only studied the sky in one or two aspects, either before or just after a storm of rain; he had not the wide comprehension of it that Stanfield had, who painted with equal enjoyment a clear Italian sky and sea, and what sailors call "dirty" weather on our English coasts. He is especially fond of the breaking of waves against the rocks, and his rock drawing is always fine. One of the most notable examples of this kind of subject is the "Castle of Ischia," so well known from the Art Union engraving. Here the sea dashes against the bold rock with glorious freedom; we can almost hear the sound of it as it breaks at the foot of its crags, but it is a "salt, serviceable, unsentimental sea," and does not in the least bring back memories of "the tender grace of a day that is gone," or indeed suggest any thought beyond admiration for the dexterity of the painter who transferred it all so cleverly to canvas. And thus it is with all his pictures. A certain brisk movement and "go" in his art carry us for a time along with him, but it must be owned that after a while we get tired of this, and would be glad to find some thought, some feeling in the painter for that which he paints so well.

But it is of no use seeking for what is not there, and we must be content with Stanfield's accurate vision of things as he saw them, nor seek from him that lofty intercourse with nature that at times reveals to the artist truths that lie beneath the outward semblance, bringing him

"Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Stanfield seems always to have taken great pleasure in Italian scenery, and from the time he first went to Italy in 1830, we find most of his pictures were of Italian subjects. In 1833 he began painting a series of ten large views of Venice, commissioned by the Marquis of Lansdowne for the adornment of the banqueting room at

Bowood, and a similar series was executed by him for Trentham Hall, the seat of the Duke of Sutherland. He exhibited these views from time to time at the Royal Academy until 1840, when they all seem to have been finished. He was not, however, entirely occupied upon them, for we find other works exhibited, and in particular, in 1836, his celebrated picture of "The Battle of Trafalgar," painted for the United Service Club, where it still hangs.[1]

The moment represented is towards the close of the engagement. Nelson's ship, the "Victory," with the "Téméraire" and the "Redoubtable," occupy the centre of the canvas, while to the right is seen the French flag-ship, the "Bucentaure" that was commanded by Villeneuve. The French ship has become unmanageable from the constant broadsides it has received from the "Victory," Nelson having from the first singled it out for himself. The huge "Santissima Trinidad" also, Nelson's old enemy, is in like pitiable case, while all around bulky hulks with shattered rigging form a scene of direful confusion that is nevertheless rendered by the artist with the utmost order and precision. It is one of the finest sea-pieces we have by him, for the long swell of the waves is drawn with absolute faithfulness, going steadily on amidst the horrible carnage, the drifting wrecks, the broken spars, and struggling human creatures that are all as nothing to that pitiless sea that rolls on, or breaks against the wrecks in sparkling spray, unmindful of the human destinies that it carries along with it. Stanfield's professional knowledge of everything appertaining to shipping, the set of sails, the lines of rigging, &c. are here especially serviceable. He understands just how it would all happen, and records his knowledge with scientific accuracy, producing a work that is unequalled of its kind, for the battle-pieces of Vandervelde do not come near it in life and movement.

After this picture, exhibited in 1836, Stanfield's name

[1] The original sketch for this is now in the National Gallery. It is an interesting work, for it enables us to appreciate the painter's readiness of comprehension, and the rapid manner in which his conception was carried out.

is absent for two years from the Academy catalogues. He does not seem indeed to have exhibited anywhere in 1837 and 1838. In 1839 he was abroad nearly the whole year, but sent a few small works to the London exhibitions. On his return in 1840, we find him, however, in full force with no fewer than six pictures at the Academy, and all important works.

The "Castle of Ischia" before mentioned and "Puzzioli in the Bay of Baiae" followed in 1841, and in 1845, as the result of a visit to Holland, came "A View of the Scheldt," and one of his noblest works—that called "The Day after the Wreck," in which a fine East Indiaman is seen lying helplessly ashore on the Ooster Scheldt while the sea still fumes around it, though the terrible storm in which it has been for ever disabled has passed away. Stanfield's wanderings never carried him, like Roberts, to very distant lands. He does not seem ever to have gone beyond Europe, generally choosing Italy, Holland, or France for his summer trip, and often not going out of England. In 1842 we catch a glimpse of him in Dickens's life enjoying a delightful tour in Cornwall with Dickens, Maclise, and Forster.

"Such a trip," writes Dickens, "as we had into Cornwall just after Longfellow went away! .... Sometimes we travelled all night, sometimes all day, sometimes both. .... Heavens! If you could have seen the necks of bottles, distracting in their immense varieties of shape, peering out of the carriage pockets! If you could have witnessed the deep devotion of the postboys, the wild attachment of the hostlers, the maniac glee of the waiters! If you could have followed us into the earthy old churches we visited, and into the strange taverns on the gloomy seashore, and down into the depths of mines, and up to the tops of giddy heights where the unspeakably green water was rolling, I don't know how many hundred feet below! If you could but have seen one gleam of the bright fires by which we sat in the big rooms of ancient inns at night until long after the small hours had come and gone. .... I never laughed in my life as I did on this journey. It would have done you good to hear me. I was choking and

gasping, and bursting the buckle off the back of my stock all the way, and Stanfield got into such apoplectic entanglements, that we were often obliged to beat him on the back with portmanteaus before we could recover him. Seriously I do believe there never was such a trip. And they made such sketches, those two men, in the most romantic of our halting places, that you would have sworn we had the spirit of Beauty with us, as well as the spirit of Fun."

One of these sketches was of the famous Logan stone, with ponderous John Forster, who however beat them all in climbing, perched on the top of it, the others mischievously rocking it to dislodge him from his giddy position. Maclise mentions this excursion as a time of never-to-be-forgotten delight in a letter written in after years to Forster,[1] and indeed all four friends seem to have enjoyed themselves somewhat after the fashion of riotous schoolboys let loose for a holiday. In "the spirit of fun" also did these friends enter into the various projects proposed by Dickens for theatrical entertainments at Tavistock House. Here Stanfield was invaluable as scene-painter to the little theatre which "had for its lessee and manager Mr. Crummles, and for its poet Mr. Wilkie Collins." Stanfield entered fully into the spirit of all these undertakings, and although he had given up scene painting as a profession, he seems to have enjoyed an occasional return to it in the service of his friends. Dickens relates how one day he went up to Hampstead with Mark Lemon to see Stanfield, who had been for some time very unwell. They found him rather dismal, and he told them that henceforth he must confine himself to small canvases, as large pictures were now beyond his powers. But Dickens declared he should paint bigger ones than ever, and asked what he thought of beginning on an act-drop for a proposed theatre at Tavistock House. Stanfield was delighted with this idea, which he eagerly took up, "and," says Dickens, "we cheered him up very much, and he said he was quite a man again."

[1] See Life of Maclise

This drop-scene, which represented the Lighthouse in Wilkie Collins's "new and domestic melodrama" "The Frozen Deep," was afterwards painted by Stanfield in the course of two mornings. This piece, as every one knows, was performed by the renowned amateur company on several occasions with great success, and when the scenery was done with, Dickens had the scene that Stanfield had painted put together and framed (for it was in two pieces), and hung in the hall at Gad's Hill, where it excited universal admiration. At the sale at Gad's Hill, after Dickens's death, this famous scene, which, as we have seen, was accomplished by Stanfield in the space of two mornings, sold for one thousand guineas.

Stanfield had many friends among the actors of his time, and was for many years an active member of the Garrick Club, serving on its committee and interesting himself much in its welfare. To his gift also one of the houses for retired actors at Maybury owes its origin, and in every way he seems always to have shown kindness to the profession wherewith his early career was associated. The last piece he painted for a public theatre was a drop-scene at the New Adelphi, painted as an act of friendship for Mr. Webster when he first opened that house.

From 1845, when he exhibited the picture before mentioned of "The Day after the Wreck," to 1866, we find, year after year, an almost constant succession of delightful works by Stanfield appearing at the Royal Academy and other exhibitions. Among these may be mentioned, "The Mole at Ancona;" "Dutch Boats off Amsterdam;" "Lord Cochrane's Action off the Spanish Coast;" "Il Ponto Rotto at Rome," engraved in the "Art Journal;" "The Fording of the Magra by French troops," in the Earl of Ellesmere's collection; "Tilbury Fort—Wind against Tide," a splendid realistic rendering of the hard fight of wind and stream that often takes place at that part of the Thames; the well-known "Amalfi;" "Reculvers by Moonlight;" "Macbeth," a dreary, weird moorland scene, very powerfully conceived; "Market Boats on the Maas;" "The Battle of Roveredo;" "The 'Victory,' with the body of Nelson on board, towed into Gibraltar," a very fine pic-

ture that created a great sensation at the Academy Exhibition of 1853; "San Sebastian," another patriotic picture painted as a companion to "The Victory;" "The Abandoned," a noble work now in the possession of Thomas Baring, Esq.; "Dutch Vessels entering the Zuyder Zee;" "A Coast Scene near the Giant's Causeway, Ireland;" "The Fortress of Savona;" "Outward Bound," and "Homeward Bound," exhibited in 1860 and 1861; "The Stack Rock, coast of Antrim;" "The Race of Ramsay;" "The Morning after Trafalgar;" "The Mew Stone, Plymouth Sound;" "Tintagel Castle, Cornwall," exhibited with a view of the "Pic du Midi d'Ossan in the Pyrenees," in 1866.

Many of these works, together with a number of others not enumerated, were exhibited at the first exhibition of "Old Masters" at Burlington House in 1870, when it will be remembered that a special collection was made of the works of Leslie and Stanfield. Unfortunately, some of Stanfield's greatest pictures were missing at this exhibition, so that it scarcely gave a fair view of his powers, though it is too harsh to say, as some critics have done, that it detracted from the reputation he had won.

In 1867 only one picture by Stanfield, "A Skirmish off Heligoland," appeared in the Academy Exhibition. The painter, who was now seventy-four, had long been failing in health, and soon after the Academy was opened, on May the 18th, 1867, he breathed his last in the house at Hampstead where he had so long lived. He was buried at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green, for he belonged, like Mulready, to "the old faith."

No detailed biography of Stanfield has yet been written, and he seems to have lived in the memories of his friends as one distinguished by his simple genial kindness of disposition, rather than by any cleverness of speech or performance. He wrote but few letters, and as far as I can learn kept no record of his life. It has therefore been difficult to gather even these few particulars respecting it. He was twice married, and left a numerous family. His eldest son, George Clarkson Stanfield, born in 1828, as he grew up adopted the same profession as his father, and

followed closely in the same line of subjects, painting chiefly coast scenes, views of towns, and continental landscapes. He exhibited constantly at the Royal Academy from 1844 until 1876, but he then fell ill, and died in 1878.

CHARLES ROBERT LESLIE.

IN his charming "Autobiographical Recollections," Leslie, with rare modesty, tells us less of himself than of the numerous great men with whom he associated, but in every line that he wrote, as well as in every picture that he painted, his kind heart and refined nature may be found faithfully reflected.

His recollections are always pleasant ones; his memory ever failing when it might otherwise be called on to record some narrow selfishness or unworthy action on the part of a friend. Yet the praise he bestows is never mere undiscriminating panegyric, but reveals a clear insight into the peculiar and individual merits of the men of genius with whom he was acquainted, and of whom in his "Recollections" he has given us such pleasant and life-like little sketches. Coleridge, Charles Lamb, Sir Walter Scott, Wilkie, Lord Holland, Sidney Smith, Lord Egremont, John Constable, Rogers, Turner, and many other celebrated men, are all preserved to us in their happiest moods by his artistic pen; but, except unconsciously, he supplies us with no likeness of himself. He does not, like poor Haydon, whose autobiography was published shortly before that of Leslie, make his own mind the subject of anatomical dissection and exhibit its sensibilities and weaknesses to the public gaze. He shrinkingly avoids laying bare the secrets of his inner soul, and the outer events of his tranquil and happy life were not such, we may suppose, as he considered would prove interesting to his readers. Happily, however, Mr. Tom Taylor has thought differently, and in publishing with the "Recollections" a selection from Leslie's correspondence, he has given us just those little details of his life and artistic work which every reader of biography delights in and which usually give a far truer impression of

the character of a man than any elaborately written dissertation on his character and genius.

Charles Robert Leslie, although an Englishman by accident of birth, was an American by parentage, both his father and mother being natives of Cecil County in Maryland.

Robert Leslie, the father of the painter, was a clockmaker by trade, and was, his son tells us, a man of extraordinary ingenuity in mechanics. After having carried on a prosperous business for some years in Philadelphia, where he was known and respected by many eminent scientific men, Robert Leslie, in the year 1793, came to London with the view of increasing his business connections. He was accompanied by his wife and family, which then consisted of three young daughters; but, during his stay in London, two sons were born to him, the eldest of whom, born on the 19th of October, 1794, was christened Charles Robert.

After spending a few years in London, Robert Leslie was obliged to return to America in consequence of the death of his partner in Philadelphia. The home voyage of the Leslie family was a remarkable one. The ship in which they sailed, an old East Indiaman, then in the American Merchant Service, was nearly wrecked before it had cleared the English Channel. "Perhaps few instances ever occurred," wrote one of the passengers, "of a vessel suffering greater difficulties and not being lost;" and Robert Leslie records, in the journal he kept during the voyage, that after thirty-four days on board, they were only just clear of the land. No sooner were these dangers of the sea surmounted, than the unfortunate passengers were told that a French ship was bearing down upon them, and that it was necessary to prepare for an engagement, there being war at that time between the United States and France.

One of the first recollections of the future painter, then about five years old, was, he tells us, of being shut down in the gloomy hold of the vessel, where the women and children passengers were placed for safety during the battle. Far from being alarmed at the situation, however, the little

Leslie was delighted with its novelty, and he and his brother amused themselves by playing at hide-and-seek among the water-casks whilst the battle raged overhead. "All my notions of war," he writes, "were associated with the then popular piece of music the 'Battle of Prague,' which I had heard my eldest sister play on the piano; and accordingly, when I heard the groans of the poor man whose leg was crushed, and who was brought somewhere near us, I exclaimed, 'There are the *cries of the wounded.*' The burial of the man who was killed made a deep impression on me, for I saw his messmates carry him to the bow of the ship, and I could distinctly trace the human form through the white canvas in which it was tightly sewn up; and this—to me the first—image of death has never been effaced from my recollection."

Happily there was but this one man killed in the engagement, but the ship had suffered such great damage that the captain found it necessary to go to Lisbon to refit. The repairs, instead of occupying six weeks as expected, took five months and two days, during the whole of which time the Leslie family was detained at Lisbon.

Miss Leslie has given an amusing account of the discomforts of a winter in Lisbon in her "Recollections of Lisbon." From the rain that poured in through the cracks in the house, and often obliged the whole family to remain in bed all day in order to keep dry, to the snuff with which the milkman regaled himself as he milked his cow at their door, all was dirty, damp, and uncomfortable, and poor Mrs. Leslie must have greatly rejoiced when at last, on the 11th of May, 1800, they arrived at Philadelphia, after a voyage of seven months and twenty-six days from London.

On returning to America, Robert Leslie found that his business there had been greatly mismanaged during his absence, and a long and expensive lawsuit in which he became engaged, added to other anxieties, so preyed upon his mind that his health, which had never been strong, gave way, and before the lawsuit could be decided he died—in 1804. He appears to have had the same kind and amiable disposition as his son, and the loss to his wife and young

family was great. Leslie and his brother, before their father's death, had been sent to school at the University of Pennsylvania. Through the kindness of the Professors they were still allowed to continue there and complete their education, although their widowed mother's circumstances were not such as would have enabled her to pay the ordinary charges. The holidays of the boys were usually spent in visits to some uncles and aunts who were farmers in Chester County, visits that were ever remembered by Leslie with delight. "To the imagery treasured in my recollection of these simple scenes," he says, "I believe I owe much of the exquisite enjoyment I receive from reading the poetry of Burns. His 'Halloween,' his 'Twa Dogs,' and other poems in which the labours and enjoyments of the cottage are described, always transport me to the log-houses of my kind-hearted uncles and aunts in Chester County."

When old enough to choose a profession, Leslie's great wish was to become a painter. He had from earliest childhood evinced a decided talent for drawing, but his mother had no means of giving him the training required by a painter, and he was therefore obliged to give up his hopes of being an artist, and was bound apprentice, in the year 1808, to Messrs. Bradford and Inskeep, publishers, in Philadelphia. Mr. Samuel Bradford, the senior partner of this firm, treated young Leslie with much kindness; but, at the same time, he was strict in demanding from him entire attention to business, and whenever he found him drawing instead of adding accounts, he appeared much displeased, so that Leslie never entertained the faintest hope of his helping him to set out on the long road of art. But thus it was to be.

It happened, whilst Leslie was under the care of Mr. Bradford, that George Frederick Cooke, the celebrated actor, arrived in America. The excitement produced by his first appearance in Philadelphia was something extraordinary. The steps of the theatre were crowded with people, when it was known that he would act, for four and twenty hours before the doors were opened. Among others who pressed eagerly to hear him was young Leslie, who fortunately had a friend who was an assistant scene-

painter in the theatre, by whose means he got an admission which he could not otherwise have hoped to have obtained. By this means he not only had the intense delight of seeing Cooke act several times, but also had his face so impressed upon his memory, that he drew an excellent likeness of him from recollection.

There was probably, as Leslie himself declares, nothing very wonderful about this likeness, but it fortunately attracted the attention of Mr. Bradford, who from that time changed his opinion about Leslie's powers, and determined to help him to become an artist, and with this view he managed that the portrait of Cooke should be taken by a friend to the Exchange Coffee House, in Philadelphia, at a time when most of the rich merchants of that city were wont to assemble there, "and in a few hours," writes Leslie, "my fame was spread amongst the wealthiest men in the city." Such being the case, Mr. Bradford found no difficulty in raising a subscription, to which he himself liberally contributed, for enabling Leslie to study painting for two years in Europe.

Before starting for England, Leslie received a few lessons in oil-painting from a Mr. Sully, an artist in Philadelphia. They were the first lessons in painting he had ever had, but from this time forth he devoted himself to the study of art with the patient humility of a true lover.

Bearing with him letters of introduction to several artists in London, Leslie sailed from New York on the 11th of November, 1811, and, after a somewhat shorter passage than he had experienced as a child, he arrived at Liverpool on the 3rd of December. He records his feelings on entering London as having been such as can only be experienced once in a life-time. "It was my birthplace, and my earliest recollections belonged to it. I had a kind of dreamy remembrance of the magnificence of St. Paul's, and the splendour of the Lord Mayor's Show The novels of Miss Burney and the 'Picture of London had made me acquainted with its chief objects of interest, and I had often amused myself with tracing its localities on the maps. Familiar with the engraved works of Hogarth, the very purlieus of St. Giles's, from whence his

backgrounds are so frequently taken, possessed to my imagination the charm of classic ground."

Strange to say, the reality did not fall short of the anticipation. The picture galleries and the theatres were sources of never-failing pleasure to the young American artist; and the friends he soon acquired in London made him feel anything but a stranger in his native city.

His first year in London was marked by the breaking out of a war between the two great nations to which, by birth and kindred, he belonged. The hostile relations of the two countries seem, however, to have troubled him only inasmuch as they frequently caused an interruption of his correspondence with his family in America. As, when a child, he played at hide-and-seek whilst a battle was taking place over his head, so now, unconcerned by the intricate politics, declarations of war, or treaties of peace that were being carried on whilst he wrote, he filled his letters with accounts of the pictures that he and several young American artists were engaged upon, and enthusiastic descriptions of Mrs. Siddons and other favourite actresses and actors.

Benjamin West, who was at this time President of the Royal Academy, received Leslie very kindly, and he was at once admitted as a student at the Royal Academy. Through West's influence, he also gained access to the Elgin Marbles, then deposited in a temporary building in the gardens of Burlington House. Morse (another young American artist, and one of Leslie's first acquaintances in London) and he used, he says, to study from these marbles from six to eight on bright summer mornings, often bracing themselves to their work by bathing in the Serpentine before beginning it.

Besides Morse, who was but a year or two older than Leslie himself, and had had only six months' longer experience in London, Leslie became acquainted with Mr. Allston and Mr. King, American artists of some standing in London, for the former of whom, in particular, he appears to have had the greatest affection and admiration.

"My first instructors in painting," he writes, "were Mr. West and Mr. Allston. They permitted me at all

times to see the works they were engaged on, and were ever ready to give me advice and assistance in the pictures I attempted, which were then chiefly portraits of the size of life. It was Allston who first awakened what little sensibility I may possess to the beauties of colour. He first directed my attention to the Venetian School, particularly to the works of Paul Veronese, and taught me to see, through the accumulated dirt of ages, the exquisite charm that lay beneath. Yet, for a long time, I took the merit of the Venetians on trust, and, if left to myself, should have preferred works which I now feel to be comparatively worthless."

It was through this valuable friend, also, that Leslie became acquainted with Coleridge. Mr. Allston's health having become seriously affected in London, it was determined that he should go to Bristol for change of air. He and Mrs. Allston accordingly left London, accompanied by Leslie and Morse; but when they got as far as Salt Hill, Allston became too ill to proceed. Under these circumstances, Morse was despatched back to London to fetch Coleridge, who was a most intimate and attached friend of Allston, Leslie remaining with the sick man. Coleridge, whose dilatory habits have been so severely censured, proved himself at this time, at all events, fully equal to the emergency. He arrived the same afternoon that he was sent for, accompanied by his friend, Dr. Tathill, and remained at the little inn at Salt Hill, where Allston lay, until he was able to be moved, performing all the little, kind offices of friendship in the most praiseworthy manner.

"The house was so full," writes Leslie, "that the poet was obliged to share a double-bedded room with me. We were kept up late, in consequence of the critical condition of Allston; and when we retired, Coleridge, seeing a copy of Knickerbocker's 'History of New York' (which I had brought with me) lying on the table, took it up, and began reading. I went to bed, and I think he must have sat up the greater part of the night, for the next day I found he had nearly got through Knickerbocker. This was many years before it was published in England, and the work was, of course, entirely new to him. He was delighted with it."

"I had seen Coleridge before," Leslie continues, "but it was on this occasion that my acquaintance commenced with this most extraordinary man, of whom it might be said as truly as of Burke, that 'his stream of mind was perpetual.' His eloquence threw a new and beautiful light on most subjects; and when he was beyond my comprehension, the melody of his voice, and the impressiveness of his manner held me a willing listener, and I was flattered at being supposed capable of understanding him. Indeed, men far advanced beyond myself in education might have felt as children in his presence."

Beneath the high teaching of such a mind as that of Coleridge, and in the constant society of Allston, who was a painter of cultivated taste and educated judgment, it is not surprising that the powers of Leslie's mind rapidly developed. When he first came to London he knew but little, as he himself acknowledges, of the true principles of art; and his uneducated taste was incapable of perceiving the merits of many of the pictures of the old masters to which Allston directed his attention. "I remember," he says, "when the picture of 'The Ages,' by Titian, was first pointed out to me by Allston as an exquisite work, I thought he was laughing at me."

It was some time, however, before Leslie could free himself from the conventional notions of art which were then fashionable. The talk of the day was of "High Art," and classical or biblical subjects were most in favour. Accordingly, Leslie's early attempts were on such subjects as "Timon," "Hercules," "The Witch of Endor," and "Murder," an alarming picture of an assassin stealing from a cave at midnight, with a drawn sword in one hand, and, as Leslie describes it, "holding his breath with the other." The horizon, he also tells his sister, "is formed by the sea, and the moon, just rising, illuminates the distance and middle ground, while the figure is quite in shadow against the light sky and sea." Altogether a tremendous effort, and painted, no doubt, quite in accordance with the correct principles of high art, but not worthy to be compared to any of those pleasant representations of English life, drawn from the English

poets and classics, with which the name of Leslie is now associated.

The first picture which he painted, in full defiance of the art maxims which had been carefully instilled into his mind, and in that style in which he was afterwards to attain such great popularity, was "Sir Roger de Coverley Going to Church, accompanied by the 'Spectator.'" This picture was exhibited in 1819, and may be considered as the starting-point of his success as an artist. He had, it is true, before this painted the first of his numerous subjects from Shakespeare; but instead of being one of those delicately humorous scenes such as he afterwards selected, the Shakespearian subject of 1816 was the "Death of Rutland."

Sir Edwin Landseer, who was then a curly-headed youngster studying at the Academy, sat, we are told, for the young Rutland in this picture; but Leslie's chief aim in this painting was to represent the murderous Clifford, rather than his poor little victim. "The Death of Rutland," to Leslie's great delight, was bought by the Academy at Philadelphia.

In the "Sir Roger de Coverley," therefore, Leslie may be considered to have first entered upon that style of painting and that class of subjects for which his genius particularly fitted him. He had found his vocation in art, and henceforth, forsaking the difficult path of historical and classical composition, he allowed himself to choose scenes in which either the humour or beauty struck his fancy.

The picture of "Sir Roger" immediately attracted notice at the Exhibition; and Lord Lansdowne, a man of sound judgment in art, gave the painter an order for a repetition of the subject, the original picture having been executed for Mr. Dunlop, a wealthy tobacco merchant, to whom Leslie's American connections had made him known on his arrival in London, and who had always treated him with the greatest kindness.

"The original 'Sir Roger,'" says Mr. Tom Taylor, in his appreciative criticism of Leslie's pictures, "is finer in tone than the repetition. Parts of it indicate a close study

of Hogarth, especially the old yeoman, who stands to receive the Squire's greeting, with his fresh, pretty daughter on his arm. In the latter, I recognize the lady who, some four or five years after the picture was painted, became the painter's wife. Sir Roger, in his full suit of crimson velvet, on his way up the pathway to the little church, pats on the head the widow's children, who look up to him with round, wondering eyes. Their mother is a sweet and comely rustic matron. . . . Even in this picture (painted in 1819, when the painter was only twenty-four) there is no observable deficiency, either in drawing, colouring, or composition, or in linear or aërial perspective."

In the year preceding the exhibition of this picture, Leslie's favourite companion in London, Mr. Allston, went back to America, to the great loss of his English friends. The gap that his absence left in the little circle of Americans in London was, however, somewhat filled up to Leslie by the friendship of Washington Irving, who was introduced to him about this time, and soon became one of his most intimate friends. Newton and Constable, also, were his constant associates at this period, and together with Peter Powell, who shared his rooms and housekeeping, formed a merry clique of light-hearted friends.

"Nothing could be more agreeable," he writes, "than my daily intercourse with Irving and Newton. We visited in the same families—chiefly Americans resident in London—and generally dined together at the York Chop House in Wardour Street. Delightful were our excursions to Richmond or Greenwich, or to some suburban fair, on the top of a coach. The harmony that subsisted among us was uninterrupted; but Irving grew into fame as an author, and being all at once made a great lion of by fashionable people, he was much withdrawn from us."

Yet Irving, writing to Leslie, in the height of his fame, says, "I often look back with fondness and regret on the times when we lived together in London, in a delightful community of thought and feeling; struggling our way onward in the world, but cheering and encouraging each other. I find nothing to supply the place of that heartfelt fellowship."

In 1821, Leslie made a delightful excursion, with Washington Irving, into Derbyshire. One of their experiences during this expedition gave rise, it appears, to the well known story of the "Stout Gentleman." Irving and Leslie were detained at an inn in Oxford, during the whole of one wet Sunday. The following morning something was said by Leslie about a *stout gentleman* who had travelled with them the day before. "The Stout Gentleman!" exclaimed Irving, "that would not be a bad title for a tale," and forthwith, every time the coach, outside which they were travelling, stopped for a minute, he wrote down notes in pencil; and before they reached their destination he had sketched out the outline of the "Stout Gentleman." "He wrote with the greatest rapidity," says Leslie, "often laughing to himself, and from time to time reading the manuscript to me."

Soon after this expedition, Washington Irving, who had gone for a short time to Birmingham, received the following amusing letter from his friend—

"London, Oct. 22nd, 1821.

"My dear Irving,

"I should have replied to your letter of the 7th immediately, but as I had written to you the day before I received it, I thought by waiting a few days I might have an answer to that to reply to at the same time . . . . . Powell and I commenced housekeeping a week ago. It is probable that nothing will more astonish you on your return, than the metamorphosis at Buckingham Place. Not to speak of window curtains, a pianoforte, *small knives* and plates at breakfast, you will be surprised to find an *academy* established on the principle of mutual education in various branches of learning and the fine arts. During breakfast, Powell gives me a lesson in French. At five we both study carving. After tea I teach him to draw the figures, and at odd times he instructs himself in German and the pianoforte, and once a week he unfolds to me the mysteries of political economy according to Cobbett. Instruction is even extended beyond our walls, as far, indeed, as Sloane Street, where Powell delivers a weekly

lecture on perspective. In this way we pass the time; and I am sure that if I get through the winter as I have passed the last week, and with you and Newton here, it will be the most agreeable one I shall have spent in London.

"Yours ever,

"C. R. LESLIE."

To this letter Powell adds a humorous postscript, giving a still more detailed account of the charms of Buckingham Place. "We are much more pastoral here," he informs Irving, "than you would imagine. We have a *share* in a *cow* which makes its appearance twice a day in a blue and white *cream*-jug. We eat our own dinners! and *generally* have enough; yesterday, to be sure, we came a little short, in consequence of Leslie (who acts as *maitre d'hôtel*) having ordered a sumptuous hash to be made from a cold shoulder of lamb, the meat of which had been previously stripped from it with surgical dexterity by our host himself during the three preceding days. There have been a great many disputes in all ages about the real situation of Paradise. I have not, to be sure, read all the arguments upon the subject; but if I were to go entirely by my own judgment, I should guess it to be somewhere near the corner of Cambridge Court, Fitzroy Square."

Leslie was much employed at this time with his illustrations for Irving's works, which had become very popular in London; and many of his letters to Irving contain allusions to the subjects he has chosen for illustration. Besides the pictures for "Knickerbocker" and the "Sketch Book," Leslie painted a portrait of Washington Irving which, as it was not "in Venetian dress," as Peter Powell had informed Irving it was, in order to disturb his evening dreams, appears to have given him much satisfaction. He also exhibited, in 1820, a picture of Londoners gipsying.

But by far the most important work of this period was his picture of "May Day Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth," one of the best known paintings of the English school. It added greatly to the fame that Leslie had gained by his "Sir Roger de Coverley" in 1819, and at

once raised him to a position amongst the best painters of the day. It was painted for the purpose of engraving, and was exhibited in 1821. In the same year, Leslie was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy.

Sir Walter Scott, to whom Leslie had been introduced by Irving, came twice to see the "May Day" whilst it was in progress. The first time he called, Leslie tells us that he was so intoxicated with delight that he was unable to paint for the rest of the day. Sir Walter, it appears, suggested the introduction of a few archers into the picture—a hint which the painter carried out. Besides the well-known painted portrait of Sir Walter Scott, Leslie has given us a most graphic pen-and-ink description of the genial giant of Abbotsford, and the mode of life in that most charming of Scotch country seats.

"Sancho Panza in the Apartment of the Duchess," Leslie's next painting of note, was exhibited in 1824. This was the first of a series of pictures executed for Lord Egremont, a nobleman to whose munificence and true generosity of heart Leslie has borne the most grateful testimony in his "Recollections."

There are four versions of this celebrated picture, all differing in detail from one another, for Leslie seldom repeated a picture exactly. The Petworth "Sancho" is somewhat smaller than the repetition painted for Mr. Vernon, which is now in the National Gallery, and is usually considered the finest of his renderings of this subject.

"In the expression of the actors," says Tom Taylor, "the painter has caught the very spirit of the scene. Sancho, half-shrewd, half-obtuse, takes the Duchess into his confidence, with a finger laid along his nose; his way of sitting shows that he is on a style of seat he is unused to. Chantrey sat to Leslie for the expression of the "Sancho," and his hearty sense of humour qualified him to embody the character very well. The Duchess's enjoyment breaks through the habitual restraint of her high breeding, and the grave courtesy of her Spanish manners in the sweetest half-smile, a triumph of subtle expression. The sour and literal Dona Rodriguez is evidently not forgetful how Sancho, on his arrival, had desired her to have a care of

Dapple. The mirth of the whispering waiting-maids culminates in the broad, sunshiny grin of the mulatto-woman. Nor has Leslie ever been happier in the composition of any picture."[1]

Mr. Rogers' picture of "Sancho" was sold for eleven hundred and fifty guineas at the Rogers' sale. Leslie was present at the time it was knocked down, and a dealer who sat next to him asked to look at the prices he had noted in his catalogue. On Leslie giving him the list, he exclaimed, "Good gracious me! Eleven hundred and fifty guineas for Leslie's picture! Did you ever hear of such a price, sir?" "Monstrous! is it not?" replied Leslie, who afterwards related the story with great enjoyment.

In 1825, the bachelor paradise near the corner of Cambridge Court, Fitzroy Square, was renounced for one arranged according to truer Eden principles, in St. John's Place, Lisson Grove, where Leslie took a small house, preparatory to his marriage with Miss Harriet Stone, a lady to whom he had been for some time betrothed. He was married on the 11th of April, 1825, and his life from this time forth seems to have been one of the most perfect domestic happiness and content. "As for myself," he writes to Irving, "I have (as you know) made the greatest change in life that it is in our power to do, and find myself so much the happier, and, I trust, the better for it, that I scarcely seem to have lived before. All the evils of matrimony that I have heard or read of appear to me to be slanders, and all the blessings to have been underrated." Indeed, the delights of the "Academy for mutual education" now appear despicable in comparison with the delight of painting, with a wife watching the progress of the work. His amusing little chum Peter Powell, is not, however, forgotten, for Leslie writes to Irving, "If he [Powell] is not soon heard of, I must offer a reward for him, for he is one of the few that I find it hard to be without."

In the year succeeding his marriage, Leslie was elected a member of the Royal Academy, and his domestic joys

[1] "Critical Notice of Leslie's Pictures," by Tom Taylor.

and cares were increased by the birth of his first child, Robert Charles Leslie.

In this year (1826) he painted another subject from "Don Quixote" for the Earl of Essex, representing Don Quixote doing penance in the Sierra Morena, in imitation of Amadis de Gaul. This, as well as his diploma picture of "Queen Katherine and her Maid," painted about the same time, are good examples of his riper powers.

The picture exhibited in 1827, "Lady Jane Grey prevailed on to accept the Crown," was less happy in the choice of subject than those which had preceded it, but, in 1829, we again find the true Leslie charm in the "Sir Roger de Coverley and the Gipsies." Leslie, indeed, was always happy in his embodiments of Addison's conception of the genial country squire, and as the picture of "Sir Roger de Coverley going to Church" was the first picture by which he gained popularity, so the picture of "Sir Roger de Coverley in Church" was the last picture in which those qualities, which had gained him his popularity as an artist, were conspicuously displayed.

Sterne, no less than Addison, yielded rich, humorous material for Leslie's pencil. No one, indeed, we can well imagine, could have been better qualified to understand the exquisite touches of Sterne's mingled humour and pathos. "Tristram Shandy," we are told, was one of his favourite books, and in his inimitable representation of "Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman" he has revealed the truest and most subtle appreciation of the character of Sterne's most perfect creation, Uncle Toby.

Each of the three versions that Leslie painted of this subject are now in the National Collection, having been bequeathed respectively by Mr. Sheepshanks—for whom the original picture was painted—Mr. Vernon, and Mr. Jacob Bell. The Sheepshanks' picture is generally reckoned the most perfect in colour and expression. Mr. Tom Taylor finds fault, however, with the too great refinement of Uncle Toby's hands in the Sheepshanks' version. He says, "they are too delicate for the rest of his figure, and inferior to those in either of the later pictures." But this refined beauty of the hands was very probably intended by Leslie

as an outward expression of the tender sensibility of Uncle Toby's nature, which, although hidden for the most part under a rough exterior, was yet capable of the most delicate kindness. Those hands seem to me to belong quite fitly to the man who swore that Le Fevre should not die. No picture of Leslie's is better known than this, and it is, perhaps, one of the best he ever painted. It appeals to every class of beholder, and although the appreciation of the fine rendering of the humour of the situation is of course enhanced by a knowledge of the characters represented, yet the picture tells its own tale even to the most uneducated understanding.

It was exhibited in 1831, together with "The Dinner at Mrs. Page's House," a subject which he repeated, in 1838, for Mr. Sheepshanks. The same year Leslie also exhibited the admirable scene from "The Taming of the Shrew," which is one of the most popular of his Shakespeare subjects. This picture appears to have been chiefly painted whilst the artist was staying at Petworth, the seat of the Earl of Egremont, for whom the first version of this subject was executed.[1] Every year, Leslie tells us, Lord Egremont invited him, his wife, and, as his family increased, his children, to spend some portion of the summer at Petworth. Lord Egremont, indeed, seems to have had a real love for Leslie as a man, independent of his admiration for him as an artist, and ever showed him the most untiring kindness.

"He was the most munificent, and, at the same time, the least ostentatious nobleman in England. Plain spoken, often to a degree of bluntness, he never wasted words, nor would he let others waste words on him. After conferring the greatest favours, he was out of the room before there was time to thank him. When he first noticed me, he had almost entirely retired from London, living at Petworth, and benefiting the people about him in every way in his power. . . .

"His personal habits were the most simple possible; and his manner naturally shy and retiring. He might

[1] This picture was afterwards repeated for Mr. Sheepshanks, and a smaller repetition was painted for Mr. Joseph Birt.

easily be mistaken by those who knew him but slightly for a proud person; but, as Sir William Beechey said of him, he had more 'put-up-ability' than almost any other man. He would bear a great deal before he would take the trouble to be angry; but when angry, it was to the purpose, and I have known him, in more than one instance, order persons to leave his house, who, encouraged by his good nature and the easy footing on which they found themselves at Petworth, had forgotten where they were, and behaved as if that noble mansion were but a great hotel. . . . He was very fond of children, and while he was dressing, his grandchildren were generally brought into his room. He asked for ours at the same time, and they always came away, each with a sugar-plum, or some other little present." [1]

Such is the sketch that Leslie gives us of this benevolent old nobleman, who seems to have diffused a constant sunshine of happiness over all his estate. Besides the "Sancho Panza" and the "Katherine and Petruchio," Leslie painted two other subjects for the Earl of Egremont, namely, "Gulliver's Introduction to the Queen of Brobdingnag," and "Charles the Second and Lady Bellenden;" a scene from "Old Mortality;" he was also engaged upon a fifth picture at the time of the Earl's death.

Leslie received some valuable hints for his picture of "Katherine and Petruchio," from his friend Washington Irving, who wrote to him whilst the picture was still in progress, admiring it as a whole, but complaining that the figures of Grumio and the Haberdasher were deficient in character. "The Haberdasher," he suggests, "might be represented making a cautious attempt to get hold of the cap, with his eye glancing up at Petruchio as if confoundedly afraid of a sudden thwack on the poll. This would also tell upon the character of Petruchio, showing how his domineering spirit prevailed over the whole of the *dramatis personæ*. I would make Grumio of a spare form, with a roguish air. His contest with the tailor should have a more whimsical expression. The tailor himself, though

[1] Leslie's "Recollections," vol. i. p. 102 and *seq*

admirably painted, has not, in my opinion, enough of the comic." Leslie, we may infer, availed himself liberally of his friend's valuable suggestions, for no one now would think of asserting that Grumio was deficient in character, nor that the tailor had not enough of the comic.

In the year 1833, Leslie was induced, by various considerations, to take the important step of giving up his profession in England, and returning to America, where his brother had obtained for him the appointment of teacher of drawing at the Military Academy at West Point, on the Hudson river. His friends in America very naturally desired to see him settled amongst them, and for this reason they, perhaps quite unconsciously, somewhat over-estimated the advantages that Leslie might hope to derive from a residence in his own country. "The inducements they held out," he says, "were that it would give me a fixed income for life; that I should have the greater part of my time to myself, being obliged to attend the school only for two hours on five days of the week; that I should be enabled to procure an excellent education for my sons at the Academy, free of expense; that the situation was a very healthy and beautiful one, and that in America the opportunities of settling my children for life were better than in England."

But in spite of these offered advantages, Leslie appears to have had many misgivings on the subject, even before he left England, and on his arrival at West Point he soon found that the appointment at the Military Academy was far less desirable than he had expected, and that instead of two hours a day, it really took up the whole of his time. Added to this, his sympathies and interests had, during the most important part of his career, been entirely centred in England; and, although his early friends and relatives in America welcomed him again most cordially, still he says, "on returning to the scenes of my boyhood, after so long an absence, I felt like a stranger. I met some of my old schoolfellows, but my lively playmates had now become grave, plodding men of business, and we could never be to each other as in the days of our youth." "Our reasoning," he says in another place, "is generally on the side of our

inclinations; and so entirely did I now feel that England had become my home—so anxious was I to be again among my brother artists (the best in the world)—that had prudential reasons weighed more strongly than they seemed to do on the side of my remaining in America, I should probably have disregarded them. I felt assured also that I should make my wife happy by returning."

Accordingly, after a six months' sojourn in America, he brought back his family to England, in the same ship in which they had gone out, and both he and his wife appear to have experienced the greatest satisfaction when they once more found themselves on English ground, from which Leslie avows he never felt from that moment any inclination to estrange himself.

Soon after his return, he again visited Lord Egremont, who was then in his eighty-second year. Previously to his departure for America, this kind-hearted old nobleman had written to Leslie, intimating his fear that he was perhaps about to leave England on account of want of employment, and offering him a thousand pounds for a companion picture to "Sancho and the Duchess." This munificent offer was refused by Leslie, who replied to the Earl, that he "should be guilty of a robbery" were he to receive such a sum for such a picture; but he agreed to paint him one on condition that he should not receive more for it than five hundred guineas. "Gulliver's Introduction to the Queen of Brobdingnag" was the work supposed to have been painted in fulfilment of this agreement.

Leslie certainly, on his departure from England, could scarcely have expected that he and his family would spend another pleasant autumn at Petworth. In September, 1833, he took an affectionate, and as he then thought, a final farewell of his kind friend and patron; but September, 1834, found him again enjoying himself amongst the many guests, consisting chiefly of poor relations and poor friends, assembled every year at Petworth. This visit must have been a particularly pleasant one to Leslie, for the painter John Constable was his fellow-guest during part of the time.

This brings me to notice the undoubted influence that

Constable exerted over the mind and art of Leslie during the most brilliant and industrious portion of his career as a painter. In a letter from Petworth at this time, Leslie writes to Constable, "I am not aware that I have painted a picture since I have known you that has not been in some degree the better for your remarks; and I constantly feel that if I could please *you* with what I do, I should be sure to please myself. But enough of this; you may think I want compliments, but indeed I do not." But although Leslie rates Constable's opinion so highly, it is by no means certain that his influence was altogether beneficial, and many prefer his earlier style to that which was chiefly formed by the advice and example of Constable.

In 1835, Leslie exhibited "Gulliver's Introduction to the Queen of Brobdingnag," before mentioned as having been painted for the Earl of Egremont, and "Columbus and the Egg," painted for W. Wells, Esq., and since in the possession of Joseph Gillott, Esq., Birmingham. Both these pictures must be ranked in the second class of Leslie's works, both as regards their artistic merits and the interest they awaken in the subject represented.

But, if he fell somewhat below his usual standard of excellence in 1835, he may be said to have risen above it in the two following years, when he exhibited respectively the "Autolycus" and the ever charming "Perdita." Both these pictures were painted for Mr. Sheepshanks, and consequently, by his noble gift, are now a national possession, and can be studied by every one at South Kensington. They rank amongst the very few Shakespearian subjects, in which the artist has risen to a true understanding of the conception of the poet, and has been able to express it in a harmonious, though a different language. Autolycus puffing his wares, and vaunting his "very pitiful" ballads, is a true embodiment of Shakespeare's creation; and as for the clown who loves "a ballad, but even too well, if it be a doleful matter merrily set down, or a very pleasant thing indeed sung lamentably," even an honester gentleman than Autolycus could scarcely refrain from cozening him, if he had the opportunity.

The landscape in the picture of "Autolycus" is remark-

ably good. The long, level sweep of meadow land with the sheep feeding in the distance give a charming sense of summer open-air enjoyment at the sheep-shearing festival.

"For my own part," says Mr. Tom Taylor, in his criticism of this picture, "I feel this to be, on the whole, the most cheery and 'happy' work of the painter. It is free from chalkiness, and its colour is bright and harmonious. I should have been thankful for the absence of the vermilion cap which Autolycus wears; but to Leslie no picture was complete without its vermilion element, though I think he has seldom managed it with the felicity which gives the colour such value in the De Hooghes and Terburgs, from whose practice he adopted it. In the 'Perdita' by its side, the painter has not fallen behind the exquisite sentiment of Shakespeare's scene, in which the royal shepherdess distributes the flowers to her guests. Perdita herself is one of the sweetest and most graceful creatures ever embodied upon canvas."

The year that the picture of "Perdita" was exhibited (1837) was the year of her Majesty's accession to the throne, and the "little Queen," as Leslie calls her, paid a visit to the Academy before it was closed; Leslie was presented to her on this occasion with the other academicians, and in the following year he was summoned to Windsor to paint "The Queen receiving the Sacrament at her Coronation." Like all royal commissions, this picture seems to have given the painter a great deal of trouble, for the noble lords and royal ladies who were introduced into it had no notion of the value of a painter's time, and often kept him waiting for days by not sitting when they appointed.

The Duke of Wellington, however, as might be expected, was a characteristic exception to this unpunctuality. Leslie wrote to the duke, saying, that he was commanded by the Queen to introduce his portrait into the picture. "He answered my note," writes Leslie, "by return of post, and the next day he called. His first words were: 'You live a great way from my house; five miles I should say.' I said I did not think it was more than three. 'Oh, you're mistaken, its five miles.' I then said, as I was fully

aware of the value of his time, I would take the picture to Apsley House, if agreeable to him. He was pleased with this, and appointed an early day; 'but,' he added, 'my time is so little my own that I may not be able to sit. However, if I can't, I will send you word before you leave home in the morning; for your time is of as much consequence to you as mine is to me.'"

The picture of "The Queen receiving the Sacrament" was not exhibited until 1843. In the same year, he had also in the Academy the well-known scene from "Le Malade Imaginaire," now in the South Kensington Museum, and a large picture from the "Vicar of Wakefield," the "Fudge" scene. It is remarkable that this is the only picture that Leslie ever painted from the "Vicar of Wakefield," a book that has been drawn upon so largely by painters of his class of subjects.

Leslie was now at the very height of his fame, and commissions poured in upon him from all quarters, more indeed than he was able to execute. "If I have my health and strength for a few years longer," he writes to his sister in 1851, "I shall be able to save some money for my family, as I have pictures engaged at my own prices for ten years to come. The increase of the private patronage of art in this country is surprising. Almost every day I hear of some man of fortune whose name is unknown to me who is forming a collection of the works of living painters; and they are all either men in business, or who have made fortunes in business and retired." Most of his pictures were purchased by men of this class.

But although his fame as an artist, and consequently the price he obtained for his pictures, went on increasing with years, it must be admitted that his later pictures are not quite equal to those of his early and middle time.

Leslie, in truth, was at no time of his life a great colourist, and as he got older, instead of his colours growing deeper and more mellow, as is often the case with artists, they grew more and more chalky and opaque. He knew his own faults in this respect, and often tried to mend them, studying Newton at one time, it is said, with good effect; but he

never attained a true feeling for colour, and the pleasure we derive from his works is often greater from the engraving than from the painting from which it is taken. He cannot therefore be regarded as a great master of the art of painting, which Ruskin defines as "the art of laying colour so as to be lovely;" nor is he an artist of great creative power, but he is incomparable in his perception of other men's ideas. This makes him so good an illustrator. He was able, as it were, to look at a subject through another man's spectacles, and to throw his own mind into that of the author whose conceptions he embodied. Nor was this sympathy with the scene he illustrated at all limited in its range, as we see by his realizations of such varied characters as Autolycus, Perdita, Sancho Panza, Uncle Toby, M. Jourdain, Sir Roger de Coverley, &c. Perhaps the pre-eminent characteristic of his art may be best defined as good taste.

This seems, at first, no very high quality for which to praise a painter; but, if we remember how often it is wanting even in artists of far higher powers than Leslie, we shall learn to esteem at its proper value the refined taste shown in all his works. His realism is never vulgar, and his idealism is founded upon natural, and not unnatural, selection.

The same quality distinguishes Leslie as a writer. In his "Recollections," as said before, he recollects only what is pleasant, and his unfailing good taste guides him safely, even in the difficult task of depicting his friends and acquaintance. His "Handbook for Young Painters," a book which contains the substance of a course of lectures delivered at the Royal Academy after he was made Professor in 1848, is interesting, not only to young painters, but may be taken as a safe guide by all who desire to learn something of the principles of art. It was published in 1855.

In the same year, he exhibited another "Sancho Panza," the last of his many subjects from "Don Quixote."[1] This, however, was not altogether a new con-

1 "Sancho Panza and Don Pedro Rezio." Painted for Lady Chantrey.

ception, but a fuller rendering of the subject painted for Mr. Sheepshanks in 1839.

In 1856, he only exhibited a figure of "Hermione," from "The Winter's Tale;" but, in 1857, the visitors to the Royal Academy were again charmed with an entirely new "Sir Roger de Coverley,"[1] which, although not equal to the artist's early conceptions of this subject, was yet felt to be a true Leslie rendering of Addison's country squire.

In 1859, two pictures by Leslie again hung on the Academy walls;[2] but all criticism of these pictures fell silent when it was heard that the well-known artist, whose works had formed an annual source of pleasure during the greater part of half a century, had died the day after the opening of the Academy exhibition.

His illness was not of long duration. The death of a much-loved daughter (wife of Mr. A. P. Fletcher) gave him, it is supposed, a shock from which he never quite recovered, for from this time he gradually sank, and in spite of all that could be done by medical skill and care, about two months after his daughter's death, he followed her to the grave, May 5, 1859.

His life was one of such sweet, uneventful domesticity that it yields but little incident to interest the reader of biography. No bitter storms of disappointment or fitful sunbursts of glory chequered its peaceful course. Often the birth of a child and the painting of a picture were the only events to chronicle as its years went by. Yet no one can read the two pleasant volumes of its record without feeling that such a life would have been ill-exchanged for the excitement of a more brilliant career. Leslie had the delight before he died of knowing that his youngest son, whom he had brought up to the same profession as himself, was likely to achieve a high position as an artist. Mr. George D. Leslie's charming works are too well known at the present day to need any mention here; but it may

[1] "Sir Roger de Coverley in Church." Painted for T. Miller, Esq., Preston.

[2] "Hotspur and Lady Percy," and "Jeanie Deans and Queen Caroline."

be stated that his first picture at the Royal Academy, "Reminiscences of the Ball," was exhibited in 1859, the year his father died. Another son, Mr. Robert C. Leslie, is also an artist of high merit as a painter of sea-subjects.

DAVID ROBERTS.

THE life of David Roberts, as related by himself in his autobiography, journal, and letters,[1] is one of the pleasantest biographies we have of our English artists, for it is told simply and naturally, without any of that striving after effect and painful egotism that is usually apparent in such works. It is true that the throbbing heart of the writer is not dissected before us, as in Haydon's elaborate piece of self-anatomy, but we are permitted to gain sufficient acquaintance with it to appreciate its warmth and kindness, and to recognize that it belonged to an upright, hard-working, and lovable man. His affections, trained in poverty, were strong and true, and his sympathetic nature, easily moved by the sorrows and joys of others, made him many friends, especially among struggling young artists, whom, remembering his own early life, he ever took pleasure in helping both with his advice and praise.

This early life of his, as seen by his own description, had all the bracing effects without any of the bitterness or degradation of poverty. His father was a humble shoemaker and cobbler, and his mother, to help in the family expenses, took in washing; but, though they had to work thus hard for a living, they never asked help from anyone, but made their way by honest labour, earning their daily bread. This worthy pair lived at Stockbridge, then a suburb, but now part of the new town of Edinburgh, in an old tumble-down house, of which a picture is given in Ballantine's book. They only occupied two rooms, however, a "but and ben" in this quaint old dwelling; and

[1] Carefully arranged and edited by his friend Mr. James Ballantine, and published with a selection of etchings from his pictures, and facsimile reproductions of his pen-and-ink sketches, in 1866.

in one of these David Roberts was born on the 24th of October, 1796. He did not, as may be imagined, receive much education in the way of school-teaching, but was first sent to an old dame in the village, "more," he says, "to keep me out of the way of being run over by carts, or drowned in the water of Leith, than for anything she could or would teach me;" and then afterwards to a school in Edinburgh, where he was so cruelly treated that it gave him a great dislike to school, and he left it when about eleven to be apprenticed to a trade.

But what trade was the question? His father would have had him "sit down on the stool aside him, and learn to mak and mend shoon." But his bent towards art had been early declared; how derived it is difficult to tell, for the only pictures that fell in the child's way were the illustrations—not gorgeous then, as they are now—to such works as "Cock Robin" and "Little Red Riding Hood," &c. Panoramas and collections of wild beasts were, however, sometimes to be seen in the fields around Edinburgh, and the pictures on the outside of these caravans were sources of attraction to his youthful taste. "I was wont," he writes, "on going home, to give my mother an idea of what they were by scratches on the whitewashed kitchen wall, made with the end of a burned stick and a bit of keel, which representations she obliterated by whitewash whenever her curiosity had been satisfied." One of his father's customers, however, happened one day to see these bold delineations of lions, tigers, &c., and asked who was the artist. "Hoot!" replied the mother; "it's our laddie Davie; he's been up at the Mound seeing a wild beast show, and he caulked them there to let me see them." The customer was interested, thought the drawings clever, and it was mainly through his representations that young Davie was apprenticed, not to the shoe-trade, but to a house-decorator of some reputation in Edinburgh, by name Gavin Bengo.[1]

[1] This is not related in his autobiography, but in a memoir by Mr. J. Bruce Thomson, that appeared in "Macmillan's Magazine" in 1866. It is further stated, that such was Roberts's feeling of gratitude for this kindly service, that in after life he regularly sent this first patron a sum

Under Bengo he had to suffer much the same harsh treatment as at school. "At first," he writes, "my apprentice-master was very kind to me, allowing me occasionally a little time to practise drawing; but he was passionate, fitful, and tyrannical, and, as he kept more apprentices than men, the newest comer was always the favourite; and when a younger apprentice came to the shop I lost his favour and any opportunity I had previously enjoyed of improving myself in my favourite pursuit. My remuneration was two shillings weekly during the first year, with a rise of sixpence weekly every succeeding year. During the first year I had to go to my master's house for the key of the shop every morning at five o'clock. I often knocked loud and long before I could rouse him, and had to take care and keep behind the outer railing when he opened his bed-room window, from whence he threw the large key in my direction as if he meant to hit me, making it whistle over my head. His house was distant about a mile from the shop, which, during eight months in the year, I was obliged to have open before six o'clock. The smell of this dungeon, after being shut all night, was very nauseous, and often made me ill; but here I had to grind colours all day long till eight at night, excepting an hour each for breakfast and dinner, during which I had to run to and from my father's house, which was above a mile distant. In the winter, however, the hours were from nine till four, so that I could devote my evenings to drawing and reading. So closely did I apply myself that I felt quite unhappy in the morning if I could not see something I had done on the previous evening. As my poor father worked at night, he kept a well-trimmed lamp, which served us both, and a chest which stood close by was used by me for a drawing-desk. Here I was to be found at work night after night; and my father's customers, when they came in, were wont to examine my drawings, and exclaim, 'Hoo has the callant learnt it?' I cannot say that my father ever encouraged me much; but my mother did, and was very proud of her 'Davie.'"

of money, which was continued by bequest even after Roberts's death, though the recipient never knew who was the donor.

It is in truth difficult to see "hoo the callant learnt it," but learn it he did. Happily, the severity of his apprenticeship was somewhat mitigated by the friendships he made among his fellow-apprentices, many of whom were older than he and knew more about painting. One of these was William Kidd, who afterwards came to London, and exhibited several pictures of Scottish life at the Royal Academy.. Another was William Mitchell, who used to excite the admiration of the workshop by showing little pictures in oils that he painted out of time. These two, with probably D. R. Hay, the decorative painter, who was also an apprentice, and Roberts's chief "chum" now and through life, opened at one time what they called a "Life Academy," to which Davie was admitted. The Academy met in a dark, cellar-like place, beneath the house of Mitchell's mother, which was reputed to have been shut up ever since the time of the Great Plague. But neither ghostly nor sanitary terrors deterred these enthusiastic young artists, who dragged thither a live donkey as their first model, which, by its brayings at night, added to the reputation the place had for being haunted. When the donkey was released they stood as models to each other, and progressed so much, that they at last opened an exhibition of their pictures, to which Roberts contributed a large painting of "The Battle of Trafalgar," which procured him the title, among his companions, of "Young Vandervelde."

His seven years' term of apprenticeship was now drawing to a close, and in 1815, when he was nineteen years of age, he took leave of his master "without regret," as we are not surprised to hear, and went to Perth, where he engaged himself as foreman to a house-painter from London, named Conway, who was then employed in decorating Scoon Palace. In Perth he remained about a year, and carried away with him, as we find in one of his letters written in after life, a lively recollection of its "fair maids." Here he attended a dancing-school and decorated the walls of the school with pictures, perhaps as the price of his lessons. He also became a freemason at the Scone and Perth Lodge, and was a great favourite among the brothers, distinguishing the Lodge by painting for it some splendid masonic

aprons. He was indeed a favourite everywhere, even with his older fellow-workmen, though some of them complained that "the young chap took the wind out of their sails."

He appears, however, to have grown tired of this decorative work, or to have become ambitious of something better, so he returned to Edinburgh to seek employment. It happened, at this time, that a circus was opened in Edinburgh, and the proprietor, a Mr. Bannister, wanted scenery painted for it. A friend, remembering, probably, Roberts's early efforts in this line, recommended him; and Mr. Bannister engaged him at a salary of 25*s.* a week, he undertaking to paint all the scenery of the company, to travel with them, "and make himself generally useful." "This," he says, "was the commencement of my career as a scene-painter —at that time the highest object of my ambition; for my knowledge of art was chiefly derived from the scenery of the Edinburgh Theatre Royal, as seen from the shilling gallery."

He travelled with this strolling company, occasionally acting as well as painting for it, to many of the towns in the North of England, and at Carlisle painted his first series of scenes in the Town Hall, that had been hired for the performance; but the company was not successful, and Bannister gave it up after a time and Roberts had to return to house-painting in Perth.

Not for long, however, for in July, 1818, we find him back in Edinburgh, acting as assistant scene-painter at the Edinburgh Pantheon. Here he acquired a reputation, for on one occasion when the principal scene-painter was ill, he produced a scene—a street in Rome—that excited general admiration, and led to his being engaged at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, a very large house, where he received a salary of 30*s.* a week.

Upon this income he married, in 1820, a Miss McLachlan, and in the same year returned to Edinburgh, where he "furnished a snug little house from his earnings," and became scene-painter to Mr. Murray, of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. It was at this time that he became acquainted with Clarkson Stanfield, who was then painting scenes at a rival theatre, and these two artists, so similar in their

hopes and occupations, soon became fast friends, and continued so through life. It was by Stanfield's advice and example that he now sent three small oil-paintings to the Edinburgh exhibition of 1822, two of which sold for 50*s.* each, to his astonishment and delight.

His powers and knowledge all this time were rapidly developing. Although he had had no regular instruction beyond a week's study in the Trustee's Academy, and had seen no great works of art, either by ancient or modern masters, he had taught himself more of composition, light and shade, &c., than most students at the Royal Academy learn with every advantage in their way. This success of his pictures gave him new hopes, and "many a night," he says, "after my hard day's work at the theatre, did I light my lamp and paint till midnight."

In 1822, his engagement with Mr. Murray being over for a time, Roberts, on the suggestion of the well-known actor, Barrymore, determined to try his fortune in London. Here, after having displayed his talent by painting two or three scenes, he was engaged by Mr. Elliston for Drury Lane, for a term of three years. On entering upon his work, he found his dear friend Stanfield already installed at the same theatre, and these two artists continued to work for some time in pleasant rivalry, producing a number of beautiful scenes that met with immense applause.

But they were neither of them so occupied with scene-painting that they could not find time for smaller works. They both joined, about this time, the Society of British Artists, which had then just been formed, and Roberts sent two pictures to the first exhibition, held in Suffolk Street, both of which were sold. In 1824, he also exhibited a view of "Dryburgh Abbey" at the British Institution. In the autumn of this year, 1824, he went abroad for the first time, and took a little excursion in Normandy, where he made sketches from which he afterwards painted pictures that brought him "both profit and fame." One of these was a view of the West front of "Rouen Cathedral," exhibited in Suffolk Street in 1825, which was admiringly noticed in the "Times," and purchased by Sir Felix Booth for eighty guineas. His position as a painter was indeed

now established; his pictures always sold well, and henceforth we have only to follow him from one step to another of fame and profit. This is not nearly so interesting as watching his early career. He probably did not experience nearly so much pleasure when he sold a picture of Venice, for instance, for £630 as when he paid 2*s*. 6*d*. in instalments of 6*d*. weekly for a frame for his first oil painting;[1] nor do we in reading of it, though all through his life the same undaunted energy, industry and perseverance meet us as in his early days.

In 1826 he left Drury Lane and went to Covent Garden, where he painted the entire scenes for a new opera, called "The Seraglio," which elicited high praise from the critics, the "Times" calling the opening scene of the Temple of Bacchus at sunrise, "beautiful beyond imagination;" and the "New Monthly" declaring that the whole scenery was "the most beautiful we have ever seen exhibited in a theatre, comprising a succession of the richest classic pictures which could be imagined as belonging to a Greek island adorned with the noblest relics of ancient art, and shown in the most delicious lights ever seen by sea or land."

After this, though he painted a few drop-scenes, a series of scenes for a pantomime, representing the naval victory at Navarino, and two panoramas, the latter painted in conjunction with Stanfield, he for the most part gave up painting for the theatre, and devoted himself to architectural views. His style as a painter must have been fully developed at this time, for in 1829 he exhibited, at the Suffolk Street Gallery, one of his most popular pictures, "The Departure of the Israelites from Egypt," commissioned by Lord Northwick, who had already bought several of his works. In this picture, though it was painted before he had travelled to the East, the peculiarities of his style are fully apparent.

With David Roberts, it was always the impression made upon his mind by his subject that he sought to convey,

1 "To have painted it," he writes, "was a great achievement, but to have it actually placed in a gilt frame was a glory of which I had scarcely dared to dream."

not the actual representation of the object itself. He undoubtedly did not belong to the realistic school of painters, but it is scarcely fair to call his art mere scene-painting, as many critics are now inclined to do. His pictures, it is true, like those of John Martin, who also loved imposing architectural masses, were often scenic in effect, but this was by virtue of their broad, simple view of the subject, wherein details were left out, or merely suggested, and all that was attempted was to give a general idea of the scene as the artist conceived it should be, not perhaps as it really was. This is what Turner always does. We cannot accept his rendering of the simplest fact as literally true. Everything is seen by the light of his imagination, and made more glorious by the poetry he sheds over it. David Roberts's poetry was of a much lower order; it was not the heart-stirring poetry of nature, but the declamatory poetry of the theatre; but still it was good after its kind, was not mere rant and foolishness, and therefore has a claim to be considered as art. His practice at the theatre no doubt suggested and fostered this point of view. In looking at the buildings on the Nile, the Tiber, the Adriatic, and the Thames, he could not altogether refrain from considering how they would look transferred to a side-scene at Drury Lane, and in painting them he took care to render all that was effective, and to leave out every jarring detail. It is astonishing, this being his point of view, to find how much of real grandeur and truth there is in his works, and how perfectly they convey the impression he intends. There is nothing tricky in his art, it is all honest, though possibly easy work, and leaves a pleasant impression on the mind. Even in "The Departure of the Israelites," which is one of the most scenic of his pictures, there is nothing gained by mere crowding of properties, all is carefully conceived and admirably well balanced, conveying a wonderful idea of the massive grandeur of Egyptian architecture. The effect is enhanced also in that, at the end of the long street of Titanic palaces down which the hordes of Israelites are hurrying, one gains a view of the Pyramids—incorrectly placed, it is true, with regard to one another, but admirably

completing, as seen through the morning mist, the wonderful perspective of the whole.

In 1832 Roberts journeyed to Spain, where he hoped to find rich material in the magnificent remains of Moorish architecture. In a letter to his friend Hay, dated September 24, 1832, he writes: "I hope to leave in a fortnight from this date. I owe no man in England a shilling; I have sufficient means to sustain me for twelve months. I am burning to retrieve the time I have lost, and am determined either to 'mak a spoon or spoil a horn.' I intend going by Paris, Bordeaux, and Bayonne. The first towns I stop at in Spain will be Burgos, Valladolid, Madrid, Toledo, and Cordova; thence to Seville, Cadiz, and Gibraltar; thence to Malaga, Granada, visit the Alhambra; then hey for merry England." All this route he faithfully followed up, extending it by a little trip over to Tangiers, where he was enchanted by an African market with all its picturesque accessories.

In October, 1833, he was back again in England, bringing with him abundance of sketches and picturesque subjects for pictures, which were now for some time almost entirely Spanish. Soon after his return he undertook also the illustrations for the "Landscape Annual," to which for several years he contributed.

In 1838 he again went abroad, and this time to the East, which had long been his desire. He gives in his journal and in his letters to his one child, his dear daughter Christine, a very graphic description of his journeyings and mode of life in Egypt. The voyage up the Nile was not then made so easy as it is now, and Roberts was, I believe, the first English artist who undertook it. He went right up into Nubia, making innumerable sketches at Dendera, Goorna, Luxor, Philœ, Karnak, &c. After about three months thus spent, he returned to Cairo, "in better health and spirits," he tells his daughter, than he had been for many years. Here he found letters awaiting him announcing his election as associate of the Royal Academy. His interest in the younger Society of British Artists, of which he was at one time the president, was probably the reason he had not been elected sooner, for he had always sent his

best pictures to Suffolk Street. In 1836, however, not being satisfied with the working of the Society, he withdrew from membership, paying the fine of £100 demanded from retiring members, and relinquishing also his claim to about £90 advanced to the Society. Henceforward he sent most of his works to the Royal Academy, which rewarded him with an A.R.A. in 1839, and an R.A. in 1841. At Cairo he took many sketches and made a large panoramic drawing of the town. "No one," he writes in his journal on the 1st of January, 1839, "will ever think of the trouble the collection of them has cost me; but as they will add to the knowledge in Europe of the various styles of architecture existing in different countries and ages, I am well satisfied. To-day I have stood working in the crowded streets of Cairo, jostled and stared at till I came home sick." But not content with his Egyptian experiences, he now went on to Syria, leaving Cairo for Mount Sinai on the 7th of February, 1839, going through Petra, Gaza, Jaffa, to Jerusalem, returning to Beyrout, and thence to England in the following July.

One of the chief results of this interesting tour was the splendid work so well known as "Roberts's Holy Land," comprising his sketches, not only in the Holy Land, but also in Egypt, Nubia, Arabia, Idumea, and Syria. Before going to the East, Roberts had arranged to give Messrs. Finden the refusal of his projected work. This he did, but they did not take it, and it was brought out by Mr. Moon in 1842-9, £3,000 being paid to Roberts for the use of the drawings, which were admirably lithographed by Mr. Louis Haghe. It was a great undertaking for the publisher, and Mr. Murray, as well as Messrs. Finden, had been frightened by the cost (estimated at about £10,000); but before the book was published, the subscription list reached nearly double that sum.[1] It is curious to find that our friend Allan Cunningham might have had a part in this work. He knew Roberts well, and greatly admired his work; and was so struck when Roberts showed him his Eastern sketches, that he wrote to him the next morning,

[1] It is now being brought out again in cheaper form by Messrs. Cassell and Co.

saying, "he could think of nothing else," and offering him the use of his pen for the descriptive letterpress. "I have not travelled," he writes, "it is true; but the subject is familiar to my mind, and I have taste enough in art and knowledge enough in architecture to induce me to think that, with the aid of your own recollections and notes, I should acquit myself not only without blame, but with honour." The offer was not accepted, to Roberts's after-regret, for there is no doubt that Allan Cunningham would have acquitted himself "with honour."

For the next ten years Roberts's pictures, as might be supposed, were chiefly of Eastern subjects, these being in great request from him. But this "wandering Davie, daundering Davie," as he was well called in some verses sung at a dinner that was given in his honour at Edinburgh, in 1842, of whom, when a boy, a fortune-teller had predicted that he would be a great traveller, was not content to stay at home quietly all this time, but made numerous little tours in France, Belgium, Scotland, and other places, whenever occasion offered, always bringing home with him abundant stores of artistic material.

Strange to say, in all his wanderings he had never yet been to Italy; but in 1851 he made a short tour through Switzerland to some of its northern towns, staying a month at Venice, where he painted his well-known picture of the Ducal Palace, which he sold to Lord Londesborough for £525. On his return, at the Queen's express desire, he painted the opening of the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, at which he had been present. But though he admired the splendour of the scene, he found it a "very unsatisfactory and unpaintable subject," and seems to have grudged the time it took him away from more congenial works.

In 1853 he again went to Italy, and this time to Rome, where he gained permission to paint in the interior of St. Peter's, one of the chief objects of his journey.

His picture of this subject, called "The Basilica of St. Peter's, Rome, on Christmas Day, 1853," is one of the finest he ever painted, and gives a wonderful idea of the solemn splendour of that vast temple, and its gorgeous

appearance in time of festival. He sold his first picture of it to Mr. Cubitt for 1,000 guineas, and another afterwards, of much the same scene, for 800 guineas. Another of his large pictures painted at this time was "A View of Rome from the Convent of San Onofrio," exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1851, and afterwards presented by the artist to the Royal Scottish Academy.

In 1858 Roberts had the great pleasure of visiting Scotland once more, with Stanfield, with whom he had now maintained an uninterrupted friendship for five-and-thirty years. They visited together all the loved scenes of his boyhood. "We strolled along the old road," he says, "and crossed the burn I had so often paddled in; after which, when passing through the village, I pointed out to Stanny an early effort of mine in sign, not scene-painting, done when I was an apprentice boy." Roberts was not one of those who, after rising to distinction, are ashamed of their humble beginnings, but ever took pleasure in remembering them, especially when he could aid others in like circumstances. His devotion to his father, mother, and sister was unremitting. Many of his letters from abroad are written in affectionate strains to the old folk at home; and he seems never to have forgotten any of his humble friends of early life, but to have rendered many of them substantial help when needed. During this visit to Scotland, in 1858, he had the freedom of the city of Edinburgh bestowed upon him, and other honours—such as being made honorary member of several foreign academies—were showered thickly upon him.

His career as a painter was, indeed, singularly successful, very few even of our greatest artists having sold their works so readily, and for such large sums. Though now getting to be an old man, he was just as hearty, cheerful, and thankful as ever. "So long as we can paint and daunder about," he writes in 1862, "let us be thankful to God, and make much of the friends left around us." Much of his time was spent with his daughter Christine, who had married, in 1841, Mr. Henry Bicknell; and in her society and that of her husband, by whom he was highly appreciated, his youth seemed to have been renewed,

especially when his grandchildren flocked around him, who from the youngest to the eldest were "his glee friends and boon companions." He was seen playing with one of these on the steps of his house on the morning of November 25, 1864, before setting out for his usual walk. He was apparently in excellent health, but during his walk he was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and died the same evening, at the age of sixty-eight.

One of his last undertakings had been to paint a series of views of London from the Thames, a subject that had been suggested to him by Turner, who said that he had thought of it too late in life, or he would have carried it out himself. He made a number of sketches of these scenes, one of which, a view of St. Paul's from Waterloo Bridge, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1862. He was engaged upon another view of St. Paul's, taken from Ludgate Hill, on the morning of his death. He left it turned upside-down on his easel when he went out for what proved his last walk.

Roberts was the familiar friend of most of the English artists of his time. He was one of the few people whom Turner visited in his later time, and Etty, Maclise, Stanfield, Sir Edwin and Charles Landseer, Daniel Macnee, Edward Cooke, Solomon Hart, and many other R.A.'s were frequent guests at his hospitable table. He was a member of the Garrick Club, and subscribed £1,000 for building the new club-house. It was here that he became acquainted with Thackeray, who greatly appreciated his art. "As one looks," Thackeray wrote, "at the multifarious works of this brave and hardy painter, whose hand is the perfect and accomplished slave of his intellect, and ready, like a genius in an Eastern tale, to execute the most wonderful feats and beautiful works with the most extraordinary rapidity, any man who loves nature must envy the lucky mortal whose lot it is to enjoy it in such a way." Roberts's mode of execution was in truth marvellously rapid. It is recorded of him that he painted two of his pictures in two hours apiece. "With a few touches," says his biographer, "he could produce an effect rivalling in apparent elaboration the most laboured pro-

ductions, and far excelling them in breadth and power. He seemed to have the faculty of photographing objects on his eye, for I have again and again been with him while he was sketching very elaborate structures, or very extensive views, and he took in a large mass at one glance, not requiring to look again at that portion until he had it completed in his sketch." No doubt much of this facility and quick decision was gained by his early training as a scene-painter, but from his earliest time he seems to have astonished every one by his power of seizing a scene and conveying it at once to canvas.

The number of his works is truly surprising. Ballantine enumerates 279 paintings, but his drawings seem to have been too many to be counted. Those remaining in his studio after his death, and after his daughter had made her selection, occupied a six days' sale, and realized between £16.000 and £17.000.

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

EDWIN LANDSEER was born at 83, Queen Anne Street, on the 7th March, 1802—the third and youngest son of John Landseer, A.R.A., F.S.A., and Engraver to the King. His mother was a Miss Pott, a lady with whom his father first became acquainted at the house of the eccentric Charles Macklin, actor, lecturer, dramatist, vintner, publisher, chapman, &c. &c. Her portrait is still to be seen in the celebrated picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which is known under the various names of "Macklin's Family Picture," "The Cottagers," and "The Gleaner," in which she is represented with a sheaf of corn on her head. So that, even on his mother's side, the parentage of Sir Edwin Landseer is not devoid of artistic interest.

John Landseer, his father, was in many ways a remarkable character. The son of a jeweller, settled in London, he studied engraving under William Byrne, and rose to such eminence in his profession that he was appointed Engraver to the King, and was one of the few engravers of his day upon whom the Royal Academy conferred the rank of associateship. His best title to fame in connection with his profession is, perhaps, his brave and strenuous endeavours to obtain a proper recognition of the importance of engraving as a fine art, and to establish the right of his brethren of the burin to be admitted to the full honours of the Academy. With these ends in view, he delivered, in 1806, a series of lectures at the Royal Institution, and is said to have accepted the half-honours of associateship, in the hope of being able to work better for the interests of engravers from within the charmed circle of the Academy. His efforts, however, were fruitless, and, whether or not from disgust at his ill-success—a point on which there is much doubt—he, for the rest of his life, turned his atten-

tion to archæology rather than art, and produced several works on antiquities, such as "Observations on the Engraved Gems brought from Babylon to England by Abraham Lockett, Esq." (1817), "Sabæan Researches," "Antiquities of Dacca," &c.

Perhaps the best testimony to the worth of John Landseer as a father is a portrait of him by Sir Edwin, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1848, under the modest title of "A Sketch of my Father," and which shows him as an old man, with long, white locks and extreme sweetness of expression, holding a large open volume. This charming portrait would be of itself sufficient to prove the tender regard in which he was held by his most famous son; and that this regard was the natural return of the love and care of a good and kind parent is a fact the evidence of which is not difficult to find, if we only look to the list of engravings which he executed from his son's works.

When Edwin was a boy of only twelve years old (1814), his father engraved his drawings of "The Lions' Den" and "Nero" (a lion); and he not only executed in part the large engraving from Edwin's ambitious and successful picture of "Alpine Mastiffs reanimating a Distressed Traveller" (1820), but he wrote a pamphlet to accompany its publication in 1831.[1] He also wrote an essay on the "Carnivora," published with engravings of lions, &c., five of which were engraved by his son Thomas, after designs of his son Edwin.[2]

Yet John Landseer had his eccentricities as a father, one of which appears to have been an opinion (also held by the father of Sir Thomas Lawrence) that ordinary education was unnecessary, if not harmful, to boys who were destined for artists. Of regular schooling Edwin Landseer had none, so that he could not write until long after the ordinary age.

[1] "Some Account of the Dogs and of the Pass of the Great St. Bernard," &c. By J. Landseer, F.S.A., and Engraver to the King. Printed for John Landseer, 8, Southampton Street, Fitzroy Square.

[2] "Twenty Engravings of Lions, Tigers, Panthers, and Leopards, by Stubbs, Rembrandt, Spilsbury, Reydinger, and Edwin Landseer; with an Essay on the Carnivora by J. Landseer, A.R.A."

Whatever may be alleged in favour of the general cultivation of an artist's mind, it can be safely asserted that there was never a boy upon whom the opposite theory could be tried with more apparent certainty of success. As Pope lisped in numbers, Landseer may be said to have scribbled in design. How early his first sketches from the life were taken is not certain, but certainly before he was six years old; and it is recorded that, as soon as he could hold a pencil with some steadiness, he was sent into the fields to draw. Amongst his early sketches, now in the possession of the nation, and at present exhibited at the South Kensington Museum, is one of a fox-hound, drawn from the life, at the age of five—quite marvellous for its thorough conception of form and appreciation of character. A good notion of his father's method of education may be given in his own words, as reported by Mr. William Howitt to Miss Eliza Meteyard. One evening, as Mr. John Landseer and Mr. William Howitt were walking together along the Finchley Road towards Child's Hill, Mr. Landseer stopped by a stile, and said: "These two fields were Edwin's first studio. Many a time have I lifted him over this very stile. I then lived in Foley Street, and nearly all the way between Marylebone and Hampstead was open fields. It was a favourite walk with my boys; and one day, when I had accompanied them, Edwin stopped by this stile to admire some sheep and cows which were quietly grazing. At his request I lifted him over, and, finding a scrap of paper and a pencil in my pocket, I made him sketch a cow. He was very young indeed then—not more than six or seven years old. After this, we came on several occasions; and as he grew older this was one of his favourite spots for sketching. He would start off alone, or with John[1] or Charles, and remain till I fetched him in the afternoon. I would then criticize his work, and make him correct defects before we left the spot. Sometimes he would sketch in one field, sometimes in the other; but generally in the one beyond the old oak we see there, as it was more pleasant and sunny." Miss Meteyard adds that these two fields lie nearly opposite

[1] ? Thomas.

what is now the Finchley Road station of the North London Railway, and open out into West End Lane, a little below Frognal and the parish church.[1]

Valuable as were doubtless the hints he received from his father, his own natural genius was so strong that he had little need of instruction. He required only to be left alone in the fields with pen and pencil, and nature in him and outside him did the rest. His earliest sketches show a facility in drawing, a gift of design, and an appreciation of character which no education could give. Commencing with a pencil, he soon learnt the use of other materials; by the time he was seven he could etch well, and he soon obtained perfect mastery over chalk and sepia and water-colours, so that he could combine their special uses in one drawing with excellent effect, and he could paint in oils before he was twelve years of age.

But if his genius was extraordinary, it must not be forgotten that all the conditions of his life conspired to foster it in a healthy way. No lack of encouragement ever dulled his taste, no uncongenial studies ever thwarted the growth of his special talent. With a father who did all he could to direct his energies in this one direction, with brothers and sisters, and an uncle (Mr. Henry Landseer), who were all accomplished artists, and lived under the same roof, with all around him recognizing and proud of his genius, and especially with one brother, Thomas, his elder by some years, who devoted himself to etch and engrave the drawings of his younger brother, and did so with a skill and sympathy which has never been exceeded, the course of young Edwin's true love for art ran smooth indeed. Nor was the pride in him and the love for him confined to his home. His natural cleverness was assisted by his frank and genial disposition in making for him friends from the beginning to the end of his life. Notably amongst these early friends and encouragers must be mentioned Mr. W. W. Simpson, of Beleigh Grange, Essex, where Edwin as a boy had a second home. Here he met with his celebrated canine friend Brutus, who with his son (Edwin's own dog)

[1] "Memoirs of Sir Edwin Landseer," by F. G. Stephens. George Bell and Sons. 1874.

were to form the subjects of many of his early pictures, and to repay his affection for them by enhancing his young fame. Here also he made drawings of Persian cats and horses, and enjoyed the admiration and affection of master, mistress, maids, and coachman. For Mrs. Simpson he caught frogs to feed her pet snake; for the maid he drew the cat and the dog; and of the coachman, in 1826, he painted a portrait called "Waiting for Orders," which was sold at the artist's sale for 32 guineas. In his boyhood he was the pet of Beleigh Grange, as in his manhood he was the favoured guest of Woburn and Balmoral.

There is nothing recorded to dull the bright picture of his early life: to him work and play, duty and inclination, were joined together; what he liked best was set him as a task, his school-room was the open field, his lecture-hall the menagerie; and there was no rival to contest with him for the prizes which early began to rain upon him. He not only had the clear field, but he had plenty of favour, and what is more, he made the most of his advantages, so that at the age of sixteen, or even before this, he had no equal in the art of drawing animals, if we except the Royal Academician, James Ward, who was two-and-thirty years his senior.

Except a few hints from Haydon in 1815, who gave him his dissections of the lion, bade him study Raphael's Cartoons and the Elgin Marbles, and be the Snyders of England, he appears to have had no instruction but that which has been already mentioned, until he entered the schools of the Royal Academy in 1816. But by this time he had already achieved a reputation as a young artist of extraordinary promise, and the Royal Academy had in the previous year admitted him as an exhibitor, accepting two drawings, one of a "Pointer Bitch and Puppy," and the other a "Mule," portraits of animals belonging to his friend Mr. Simpson. But even this was not his first public success. In the year 1813, when he was eleven years old, he was awarded the silver palette of the Society of Arts for a drawing of animals from the life. In the next year, 1814, he received from the same society the silver Isis medal for a drawing of a hunting horse, and the same

distinction was awarded to him in the two following years: in 1815 for an original painting of a dog, and in 1816 for another of "The Stable Guardian."

In 1815 also appeared his portrait at the Academy as "The Cricketer," by Master J. Hayter, and in 1816 he was painted by Mr. Charles Leslie, in that celebrated artist's early picture of "The Death of Rutland," Leslie himself being then but twenty-four years of age. In the pleasant autobiography of Leslie, Edwin Landseer is referred to at this time as being "a curly-headed youngster, dividing his time between Polito's wild beasts at Exeter Change and the Royal Academy Schools." Those who have not had the opportunity of studying the beauty of his early work, may be surprised to hear that a picture or drawing of a "Brown Mastiff Sleeping," executed when he was ten years old, was sold in 1861 at Sir John Swinburne's sale for seventy guineas, and one of a spaniel painted the year after was bought in at the sale of Mr. H. J. A. Munro in 1867 for £304 10*s*.

Nor was his almost unexampled precocity and success doomed to fail as he grew older. His progress both in art and fame maintained its early promise, both in steadiness and rapidity. Though (probably from his attendance at the Royal Academy Schools and Polito's wild beast shows) the year 1816 produced no work of importance, a picture of "A Sleeping Dog" created an impression at the exhibition of the Society of Painters in Oil and Water Colours, in 1817, which was only exceeded by that of the "Fighting Dogs getting Wind," exhibited in the same room the year after. In 1820, "Alpine Mastiffs reanimating a Distressed Traveller," and in 1821 two large pictures of lions, "A Lion enjoying his Repast," and "A Lion disturbed at his Repast," all exhibited at the British Institution, confirmed and increased his fame; and in 1822 he obtained a prize of £150 from the Directors for his picture of the "Larder Invaded," in which his dog Brutus was introduced. In this year he also executed a fine set of five original compositions of lions and tigers,[1] and a large picture of "A Prowling Lion," and commenced his later series of etchings, one of

[1] See note to p. 280.

which was a portrait of a dog named Jack, the original of his celebrated picture of "Low Life." These he continued the next year, in which he also commenced a series of drawings of dogs and foxes, engravings from which appeared in "The Annals of Sporting" in 1823, 1824, and 1825, fourteen in number, all engraved by Thomas Landseer. The year 1824 was especially remarkable in his career for two things, the exhibition of "The Catspaw," which established his reputation as a humorist, and his visit to Abbotsford, which permanently altered the aim and enlarged the scope of his art.

At Abbotsford Landseer made studies of the great novelist, who, according to Leslie, "disliked sitting very much," and of his dogs. The celebrated deerhound Maida was at that time in extreme old age, and died six weeks afterwards. In 1827 he exhibited in the British Institution a painting called "A Scene at Abbotsford," in which the poet was introduced with Maida, "in the last stage of weakness and debility." He also, in 1833, painted a posthumous portrait of Sir Walter Scott in Rymer's Glen with his dogs Ginger and Spice, the lineal descendants of the famous Pepper and Mustard of Dandie Dinmont, and from 1830 to 1841 he made several admirable drawings in illustration of the Waverley Novels. The influence of the visit to Abbotsford may be said to have lasted throughout his life, but the last picture which related to it appeared at the British Institution in 1858, and is thus described in the catalogue:—

"Extract from my Journal whilst at Abbotsford:—

"Found the great poet in his study, laughing at a collie puppy playing with 'Maida,' his favourite old deerhound, given him by Glengary, and quoting Shakespeare,

"'"Crabbed Age and Youth cannot live together.'

On the floor was a cover of a proof-sheet, sent for correction by Constable, of the novel then in progress.—N.B. This took place before he was the acknowledged author of the Waverley Novels."

That Scott admired Landseer's work is evident from the following passage in his "Notes from the Institution

for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts," opened February 13, 1826: "Landseer's dogs were the most magnificent things I ever saw, leaping, and bounding, and grinning all over the canvas." [1]

Scotland, with its deer and its mountains, its wildness and its grandeur, was hereafter the land of his imagination, the second home of his art. He was just in the dawn of manhood, and his varied gifts seem to have expanded and ripened at once under the influence of Scott and Scotland. He also began to take more interest in mankind, and to study and paint animals more in their relation to man than purely from their own sakes. Lions, bulls, and pigs gave way before the red deer, and of his early favourites the dog alone retained a strong hold upon his art. Even dogs were treated from a different standpoint, rather as the companions of men than in their natural characters of ratcatchers and fighters. The boy's love for natural history became merged in the man's love for his fellows.

He also caught not a little of Sir Walter's spirit of romance, as was shown in his large picture of "Chevy Chase," which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1826,[2] and which may be said to have been the last of his youthful attempts at "high art," and to rival Snyders. In this year he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, being one of the few to whom the honour has been accorded at the earliest age permitted by the rules of the Academy—viz., twenty-four.

Down to this year (1826) Landseer had lived with his father in Foley Street, hiring a room for a studio in the neighbourhood, but he now, with much reluctance on his part, was persuaded to take a house in Lisson Grove, St. John's Wood. Here he remained till his death, adding to it and improving it as years went on and his prosperity increased.

In 1831 Landseer received the full honours of the Academy, and till 1840 nothing interfered to check his

[1] The pictures by Landseer in this exhibition were "The Intrusive Visitor" and "Two Pointers in a Turnip Field—To-ho!" The latter was sold in the Gillott Collection for 1,900 guineas.

[2] Now at Woburn.

success, artistic and social. The latter was almost as astonishing as the former. Introduced at an early age to the Russell family, he soon became an intimate and privileged friend. As early as 1823 he painted Georgiana, the Duchess of Bedford, and between that year and 1839 he painted a succession of charming pictures of her children, especially Lords Alexander and Cosmo, and Ladies Louisa and Rachael, now respectively, the Duchess of Abercorn and Lady Rachael Butler, some of which, as "Little Red Riding Hood," and "Cottage Industry," and "Lady Rachael with a pet Fawn," are as well known as any of his pictures. Every year he paid a visit to some aristocratic shooting-lodge in Scotland, the walls of some of which he adorned with rough sketches of his pictures of deerstalking. At Ardrinkie, a shooting-lodge on Loch Laggan, erected by the Marquis of Abercorn in 1840, and occupied by Her Majesty in the autumn of 1847, he sketched upon the wall of two of the apartments some of his best-known designs with a burnt stick and a brick, but these have unfortunately been destroyed by fire. At Glen Fishie, the shooting-place of the Duke of Bedford, and at his own house in St. John's Wood, he adorned rooms in the same way, though not, at all events in the latter case, with the same materials.

The period between 1826 and 1840, though containing few incidents for the biographer, was one of a healthy activity, both of mind and body, and was as full of success (in a different sphere both of art and society) as his boyhood and youth. Half sportsman and whole artist, he had every opportunity for indulging his taste and exercising his genius, and if it is to be regretted that he spent so much time in painting his aristocratic hosts and their pet animals, scarcely a year passed without the exhibition at the Royal Academy of one or more pictures worthy of his genius. In 1827 appeared his "Monkey who has seen the World," and his first Highland picture of importance, known best by the name of "The Deerstalkers' Return." In 1828, "An Illicit Whisky Still in the Highlands," perhaps the strongest of all his pictures of Highland life. In 1833 appeared "A Jack in Office," in which he, for the

first time, showed to the public his marvellous and unique power of bringing out the resemblance between the various characters and expressions of men and dogs, and composing scenes of a semi-satirical character, of which the humour was so plain and genuine that neither old or young, wise or simple, could help appreciating it to the full. In 1834 his picture of "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time," exactly hit the prevailing elegant antiquarian taste of the time, and added enormously to his popularity. In 1835 he first fairly showed the variety of his power in one composition, "The Drover's Departure," a picture full of natural beauty, humanity, humour, and pathos. In 1837 he achieved a success of the most worthy and endurable kind, by his picture, "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner," one of the truest and most beautiful of pathetic pictures, albeit the mourner was only a dog. In 1838 appeared "There's Life in the Old Dog yet," in which sympathy was aroused for the sake of a dog and not of his master; and in 1840, "Laying down the Law," he achieved a success in the same vein of humour as the "Jack in Office," but with a greater strain of the natural animal expression, and not without the aid of such stage properties as a book and spectacles to make a poodle look like a judge. But besides these exhibited pictures, Landseer produced during this period three pictures, all now the property of the nation, of remarkable and varied power. These are "Suspense," "The Sleeping Bloodhound," and "Dignity and Impudence," all too well known to need description.

In the year 1839 Landseer painted his first portrait of the Queen, which was given by Her Majesty to Prince Albert before her marriage. At the Palace, as at Woburn or Chatsworth, Landseer soon became a privileged friend. It has been well said of him, "He was not merely courted, indulged, observed, and worshipped wherever he turned: he was truly and heartily valued. His fine nature met response; his conversation was the delight of the most accomplished of men; and however clear it was that he was the fashion, it was equally clear that he was the friend of every household he visited, from that of Balmoral and Windsor to the most homely group of his early associates."

After the year 1840 there is still less to record of the artist's life. In this year he was obliged to travel abroad for the benefit of his health, which required complete rest. This did not, however, prevent him from making an exquisite series of drawings at the different places he visited on the Continent—Aix-la-Chapelle, Geneva, and elsewhere—some of which have been engraved in the "Art Journal." It is remarkable that he made so little use of this store of artistic suggestion in his later pictures; but, if we except a few pictures, such as "A Dialogue at Waterloo," "The Shepherd's Prayer," "Geneva," and "The Maid and the Magpie," there is no trace in his subsequent work that he had ever crossed the Channel. In 1841 he was absent from the Academy; but in the next year he appeared in force, his most remarkable contribution being "The Sanctuary," the first of the well-known series of pictures of Deer, in which the feeling of the sportsman gave place to that of the sad, reflective poet, viewing in the life of animals an echo of the lot of man. This chord of sadness once struck was never silent in his art again, although it alternated with the other chord of mirth almost to the end. In 1844 came the painful "Otter Speared," and the peaceful "Shoeing;" in 1846, the "Time of Peace" and "Time of War;" in 1848, "Alexander and Diogenes," his most elaborate piece of canine comedy, and "A Random Shot," a fawn trying to suck its dead mother in the snow—perhaps the saddest of all his pictures; in 1853, "Night" and "Morning;" in 1864, "Piper and a Pair of Nutcrackers," one of the prettiest and most playful of his pictures, and "Man Proposes, God Disposes," the most terrible of all.

Between 1842 and 1850, however, Landseer did not miss one exhibition; and, besides the pictures above mentioned, produced many noble works, such as "The Stag at Bay," "The Monarch of the Glen," and "The Midsummer Night's Dream;" and if his art was sadder in its tone, it was, as a rule, more elevated in its sentiment.

In the year 1850 he was knighted by the Queen; and, in 1853, he received the large gold medal at the Paris Universal Exhibition,—an honour not accorded to any other

English artist. In 1860 he produced his largest and, in some respects, his finest work, "The Flood in the Highlands." He had, however, been long suffering from severe attacks of mental depression of the saddest kind, and they now began to press upon him with such force that his reason gave way, and, during the years of 1862 and 1863, no finished work proceeded from his hand. His most important works between his partial recovery from this attack and his death, which took place on October 1, 1873, were the magnificent models of lions for the Nelson Monument, and the "Swannery Invaded by Eagles," a picture in which all his youthful vigour and ambition seemed to flash out again for the last time. His last portrait was one of the Queen; his last drawing, one of a dog. He was buried with public honours in St. Paul's Cathedral, on October 11, 1873.

In person, Sir Edwin Landseer was of middle height and stout, with a broad, frank face, magnificent forehead, and fine eyes; in disposition he was as frank as in his appearance; he was genial, quick-witted, full of anecdotes of men and animals, and an admirable mimic. After the death of his favourite dog Brutus—the like of whom he never could hope to meet again—he was always followed by a troop of dogs, endeavouring, it has been suggested, to make up for quality by quantity. As a sportsman he is said to have been indifferent, preferring his pencil to his gun; but, with the former, he left imperishable records of the sport of which he was most fond, viz., deerstalking. Besides his numerous well-known pictures in illustration of this sport, he completed two fine series of drawings relating to it, one called "Deerstalking," and the other "Forest Work," both of which were engraved and published. With this fondness for sport, with his genius for art, with his genial, social disposition, his tender heart, his quiet humour—in a word, his extreme sensibility to all the influences of nature or society, he possessed capacities for enjoyment of life, and of making it enjoyable to others, which have seldom been exceeded. But this sensibility, so necessary an attribute of genius, has its sad as well as its bright gifts; and Landseer had his

full share of the former. Sensitive to the least slights, imagining them when they did not exist, feeling the loss of each friend as a crushing blow, from which only partial recovery was possible, the man, as he grew older, became less and less equal to bear more, and the strained nerves at last gave way.

As an artist, he may be said to have raised animal painting to the rank of moral and intellectual art. Early abandoning the traditions of the older masters, after showing by many fine works that the abandonment was due to choice rather than want of power, he devoted his life to painting animals, chiefly dogs and deer, in their relation to man, and with a success as signal as it was, and probably ever will be, unrivalled. To this task he brought extraordinary powers, both of mind and skill.

The former may be shortly divided into humour and pathos, both of which he possessed in remarkable degree and variety. The one reached from the pure humour of animals, as in his earlier pictures, to the complicated burlesque of human nature seen in such pictures as the "Jack in Office," "Laying Down the Law," "Alexander and Diogenes,"—from the mere travesty of the "Comical Dogs" to the noble comedy of "Dignity and Impudence" and "High Life and Low Life." His pathos had an equally wide range, from the simple sorrows of "The Drover's Departure" to the deep chords of "The Shepherd's Chief Mourner" and "Night" and "Morning."

His technical skill, the early triumphs of which we have already recorded, increased rather than diminished in after life, in spite of the failure of his eyesight, which made the labour required for minute finish impossible; but he was so complete a master of his brush that he knew how to produce, with a few subtle strokes, effects which would require hours of labour to imitate. For this he has been severely blamed; but it has been stated that no one regretted more than himself that he had to have recourse to this kind of pictorial shorthand.

He was always, however, fond of, and prided himself on swift execution; and, indeed, held the opinion that work completed with one effort was the best. One work—a

magnificent picture of a bloodhound, called "Odin"—was painted by him in twelve hours, in order to justify this opinion. A picture of rabbits is said to have been painted in three-quarters of an hour. The famous "Sleeping Bloodhound," the size of life, was painted between the middle of Monday and two o'clock on the following Thursday. Another picture is said to have been executed before he made his appearance at the breakfast table; another, of a fallow deer, the size of life, painted down to the knees in three hours; and a three-quarter length of Lord Ashburton, 36 in. by 28 in., in one sitting. He also had the power of drawing, with both hands at once, a different object with each hand, specimens of which extraordinary gift have been engraved in the "Art Journal," and republished by Messrs. Virtue in the volume called "Studies of Sir E. Landseer." A full account of an occasion on which he exercised this power, as well as many other good anecdotes relating to him, will be found in Mr. Stephens's "Memoirs of Sir E. Landseer."

To the public he was only known by his art; but this did not prevent them from feeling his loss as a man whom they loved, as well as an artist whom they admired and venerated. His art was too plain and noble for them to make any mistake as to the character of the hand that held the brush. Noble, frank, sensitive, tender, genial, humorous, his thousand works, multiplied by engravings throughout the country, taught high and low that Landseer was a man who could sympathize with every phase of humanity, from the cottage to the palace—that there was no patronage in his pictures of low life, no servility in his portraits of the aristocracy, no bitterness in his satire, no false note in his sentiment. The love thus engendered was mingled with a large proportion of gratitude for the man who had devoted his life to producing pictures which not only moved them to tears and laughter, but elevated them, without effort on their part, to pure regions of poetry and reflection.

DAVID SCOTT.

THE name of David Scott is less known than those of most of the painters whose lives are included in this work. It might be said of him, indeed, that his fate was

"To live forgotten and die forlorn,"

nor, any more than to Haydon, has posthumous fame as yet come to justify his belief in himself. Messrs. Redgrave do not even mention him in their "Century of Painters," and except in S. Redgrave's comprehensive dictionary, no record is to be found of him in any of the ordinary text-books. Yet, among the many nameless martyrs to the cause of "High Art," David Scott stands forth as a man of great intellectual supremacy, a man whose thoughts, it is true, were greater than his productions, but who accomplished a large amount of remarkable work which, if more known, would, probably, assure him a higher position in the art of his country than he at present occupies. His life was written some years ago by his brother, Mr. W. B. Scott,[1] and it is from this loving memoir that the following details of his personal history are chiefly drawn.

David Scott was the son of Robert Scott, an engraver of considerable reputation in Edinburgh, mostly noted for his engravings of landscapes, and, among other works, for the plates to Dr. Anderson's "Bee." He lived in one of the high "lands" in the old town of Edinburgh, and his house, with workshops attached, looked over the roof of St. Giles's Church. In this lofty situation he worked at his trade, surrounded by pupils and assistants, several

[1] "Memoir of David Scott, R.S.A. Containing his Journal in Italy, Notes on Art, and other Papers." By William B. Scott. Edinburgh, 1850.

of whom afterwards became distinguished, and it was here that David was born on the 10th or 12th of October, it does not seem certain which, in 1806. He was the youngest of five sons who had at this time been born to his parents, but, unhappily, soon after his birth, the four elder brothers died, leaving him a solitary child. Robert Scott seems by nature to have been a stern, God-fearing man of the old Scotch puritan type, looking at all things through the medium of his own dark Calvinism. His belief became still darker under this calamity, and the gloom of the household became intense after the death of these four children, who were carried off, probably from some epidemic, within a few days. The little David was then only a year old, the only one left to the sorrowing parents, though afterwards two sons and one daughter were born to them. The new children, however, could not take the place of those who were gone, whom the poor mother never forgot, at times even pathetically calling the young ones by the names of their dead brothers.

In a household where "merriment was but another name for folly," it is not surprising that the boy David, who had naturally the melancholy temperament of genius, grew up self-centred and self-torturing. One of the earliest feats recorded of him is his making a ghost out of a bolster, a sheet, and a mask, and then, when he had set it up, being so frightened of it that he alarmed the whole house by his screams. His imagination was even then painfully active, and instead of leading a healthy, cheerful life, his morbid self-anatomy was cultivated by the influences under which he was placed. He was the favourite of his father, by whom he was chiefly instructed, though he was sent to school, and accomplished Latin and even a small measure of Greek. By this time the Scott family had moved from the "land" in Edinburgh, where, however, the engraving business was still carried on, to a small country house at St. Leonard's, a short distance from the town. Country amusements and sports do not seem, however, to have entered into the education of any of the children, who were brought up in the most rigidly pious fashion, Sundays being especially terrible, with their long sermons and

catechisms. Drawing seems to have been the chief pleasure of the younger members of the family at this time. On winter evenings the mother, says Mr. W. B. Scott, would sit at needlework with her little daughter by her side, the father at one table arranging his business affairs, and the three boys, David the eldest, Robert, and the younger William, at another table, all occupied in drawing. "Here the light and the box of water-colours were at David's command alone, not to be touched under instant and grievous penalties. A small, windowless room was set apart for the library; of this he kept the key, and admitted the others as candle-bearers only." Amongst the miscellaneous possessions kept in this little room was a copy of Blair's "Grave," with Blake's illustrations—a cheerful work for the youthful imagination to feed upon, but feed upon it his did, as can be seen by the lasting impression made by Blake on David's mind and art. Also a set of emblematical figures drawn by Hamilton were eagerly studied, and led to attempts of like kind. But, for the most part, the subjects he chose for his first attempts in painting were of the historical kind—scenes from Scottish and Greek history, "Paradise Lost," "Macbeth," &c.

He was now about nineteen years of age, and the artistic impulse had grown strong within him; he was obliged, however, to subdue it for a short time, and to turn to engraving as a means of support, for his father's health had broken, and monetary difficulties pressed heavily upon the family.

This enforced application to the engraving business was utterly distasteful to him, as appears from a sketch he has left of himself, inscribed, "Character of David Scott, 1826," in which he is represented seated at the engraving-table with clenched hands and a despairing expression, and another of similar import, in which he presses the palette to his heart, and casts away his engraving tools. Religious doubts also seem to have pressed heavily upon his soul, which found no room to stretch itself in the narrow faith in which he had been brought up. The following prayer, written about this time in one of his diaries, reflects his fierce, rebellious mood, and reveals the struggle that is going on within him:—"Thou Power, by whose aid man

raises the imperishable name, wrap round me Thy tongued flames, and of the present make immortal days. May I live not without a consecrated purpose in my life; may I reach and grasp all means for this ultimate consummation. Grant that I may hold on with undeviating step, strengthen the will, endow the power, break the arm that would retard."

In such a frame of mind as this, "everything and every person seems antagonistic;" but in David Scott's case the antagonism was not very dreadful. No seven years' servitude to pass, like young Etty—not even the frustration that Haydon endured before he carried out his purpose. "The arm that would retard"—by which it may be supposed he meant the necessity there was for his helping his father in his business—was soon broken by him, somewhat inconsiderately in regard to others who were depending upon that arm, but who, with the kindest forbearance for the selfishness of young genius, gave him all the aid they could in furthering his determination to become a painter.

So David Scott began studying from the life, and was one of the founders of the Edinburgh Life Academy Association, instituted May 2, 1827. He, moreover, set to work on a huge picture of "Lot and his Daughters Fleeing from the Cities of the Plain," with figures the size of life, in the approved "High Art" style. His first exhibited picture was in 1828, and bore the ominous title of "The Hopes of Early Genius dispelled by Death." From boyhood, indeed, thoughts of death seem to have been continually present to his mind. Often allusions to it both in prose and verse occur in his diary, and once, when challenged by his brother Robert to a poetical competition, he produced an "Ode to Death," which was so obscure and mystic that it won the prize of a guinea from the father, while poor Robert's more lively effusion remained unnoticed.

On his first visit to London, David wrote in his notebook: "Taste in art is surely very low, if one is to believe the print-shop windows. Humorous subjects are mostly run after; monkeys amuse well, monkeys are doing everything." But monkeys failed to amuse this grim young

artist, who continues: "With the exception of Haydon's 'Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem,' and our own Thomson's grand landscape of 'The Trosachs,' there is little for me." Strangely enough, even at this early date, he sees all the defects of Haydon's art, and is by no means, as one would suppose, carried away by undiscriminating sympathy with its aims.[1] Yet he boldly refuses to take warning by Haydon's failures, nor will he listen to Carey, who, on seeing his picture of "Fingal," advises him "to shoot a lower aim," adding, "you speak a dead language." But, dead language or living, it was the only one David Scott cared to speak, and if it sounded like unmeaning wailing in the ears of a careless and profane generation, so much the worse, he held, for the generation.

In January, 1830, he writes in his journal: "I think I have gained more distinctness in my ideas regarding art during this last month than during ten before. The overwhelming and perplexing have now resolved into different parts and separate difficulties; I think I can now discover with clearness the mighty structure that before was wrapped in mist. I see what I should strive to do." In this year, 1830, he was elected an associate of the Scotch Academy, his principal works before this time having been his big picture of "Lot," finished in 1829, "The Hopes of Early Genius," "Fingal, and the Spirit of Lodi," "The Death of Sappho," and a small picture of "Wallace defending Scotland."

In the course of the next year, 1831, when he was only twenty-five years of age, he published, with the well-known Scotch bookseller, Constable, a series of six remarkable drawings under the title of "Monograms of Man." These strange designs, in which some of the deepest problems of metaphysics are set forth in pictorial shape, appear to have haunted his mind for years before. Almost from boyhood, indeed, he had speculated on the mysteries of existence, and now at twenty-five he grapples with questions that might well deter the oldest philosopher. The first design is that *Of Life*, expressed by the descent from above

[1] See Life of Haydon, p. 286.

of the Creating Hand at whose touch all things—sun, moon, and man upon the earth—spring into being. 2. *Of Relation.* This shows the typical man, in the pride of his dominion, standing, like the angel of the Apocalypse, with one foot on the sea and the other on the earth, with the sun above him as an expression of power. 3. *Of Knowledge.* A youth impelled, by his desire to know, to look into the eye-sockets of a skull. 4. *Of Intellect.* The spirit of man soaring from the earth across the sun into the vast region of the unknown, where the gigantic form of Divinity is dimly visible, with flame and water proceeding from the hollow of his hands, but with head hidden from view. 5. *Of Power.* A chain binding all things, though man fondly regards himself as free. 6. *Of Death.* A cup offered from out eternity to all mankind.

These strange imaginings are all expressed in bold outline with a power of hand that reveals their author, not only as a man of great inventive faculty, but also, even at this time, as an accomplished artist. In their mode of expression, and even, in some degree, in their mode of conception of abstract ideas, these designs resemble those of Blake; but although Blake's influence was powerful over the mind of David Scott, it did not at any time materially affect the originality of his art. His anatomical knowledge for one thing prevented him from indulging in Blake's vagaries with regard to the human form, and though in his aims at the sublime he treads sometimes dangerously near the ridiculous, he never actually falls into it as Blake often did.

This extraordinary work on "Man" was the first series of designs he published. Next came a set of twenty-five large outline illustrations to "The Ancient Mariner," conceived in the same weird spirit as the poem itself. These designs were not published until 1837, but they were drawn, he states in his diary, during the long winter nights of 1831, at which date he wrote to Coleridge respecting them, who replied in a mournful letter, speaking of shattered health and lost hope, and stating, truly enough, that his recommendation would not have any weight with the publishers in respect to bringing out the work. "I ques-

tion," he writes, "whether there ever existed a man of letters so utterly friendless, or so unconnected as I am with the dispensers of contemporary reputation, or the publishers in whose service they labour." It was indeed no easy matter to find a publisher for such a work, for the poem itself at that time was not nearly so well known as it is now, and the illustrations certainly do not appeal to the popular taste.

The Ancient Mariner is represented in these illustrations as a strongly-built, bony man, with a face on which the various moods of indifference, despair, madness, and redeeming hope are depicted as graphically as in Coleridge's verse. The contrast is especially marked between the plate in which he crouches in demoniac horror on the deck—with the dead, with a curse in their eyes, all lying with their feet turned towards him, and the bird round his neck dragging him to the ground—and the one in which he unawares blesses the living creatures of the sea, and the curse is removed, and the albatross drops off his neck into the sea.

But still finer than such plates as these, which merely give pictorial expression to the poet's fancy, are those in which the imagination of the artist works as well. Such, for instance, as the one wherein the Spirit of the South sends forth the albatross as a sign of peace to the ship; or where the Avenging Spirit, a vague gigantic form bending its head in through the port-hole, is dreamt of by the strong sailors asleep in the cabin; or the Spirit of the South moving the ship onward; or the spectre bark with its fearful crew shooting away;[1] or where the Spirit of the South departs, and angel forms guide the ship. These last are very different to the usual puny conceptions of angels. There is room for only one of these grand beings in the whole expanse of sky above the ship over which it impends, guiding the vessel as it would seem by some magnetic force. These designs were published by Mr. A. Hill of Edinburgh, and by Ackermann in London in 1837, but would seem to have met with little recognition.

In 1832 David Scott exhibited at the Scotch Academy a

[1] This and another of the designs from this work were reproduced in "L'Art" (April, 1879), in which journal this life first appeared.

picture of "Sarpedon carried by Death and Sleep," a finely coloured work, now in the possession of Dr. S. Brown; also "Nimrod," "Pan," "Aurora," and a sketch of "Burying the Dead." He also sent his picture of "Lot," to the British Institution, but it was rejected as being *too large*. At which he writes in his journal: "Reject a work of art for its size! You might as well reject a man for being tall!" Disappointment, it is evident, was already telling upon him. With pictures all returned unsold from the exhibition, "Lot" rejected, and his "Monograms" "altogether a loss;" with "difficulties in study, for nothing but the best is worth a thought;" with doubts of every kind pressing upon his mind, and with hopeless love hinted at as rending his heart—though it is to be hoped not with such fearful pangs as those depicted in a series of drawings illustrating this subject found among his papers—he now turned for relief to the idea of going abroad.

Before departing for Italy, whither his artistic desires led him in the autumn of 1832, he writes in his journal: "August 5, 1832. Various are the causes that render my going abroad necessary. I lose myself in thinking over the journey, and what it may do. Everything I have yet attempted has been unsuccessful; so many disappointments make effort appear vain. What I must do is to cut off all recurrence to former efforts, except in so far as they may coincide with my later-formed ideas of art, and to hold grimly on in the conscientious course. A great happiness it is that futurity is yet unseen, and unmade; therein yet may be somewhat to answer my desires. Happy are those new hopes and wishes that still descend on us when all we valued in ourselves is burnt up and scattered. Happy it is that a vision can regird the loins of the mind and reattune the chords of life. I now seal up this book and put all in order before going abroad. Also seal up my will." The self-scrutiny of the man is painfully apparent in all this. He is perpetually analyzing his own mind.

The journal kept during the two years spent in Rome is less subjective, and therefore more healthy in tone, though it is clear that disease was now gaining on his bodily frame. Space will not allow me to quote more than a few extracts.

His reverence for the great masters does not, strange to say, appear to have been great. We have, at all events, no raptures of enthusiasm over their works. At Venice he writes:—

"Tintoretto, in every respect, is frequently wide of individuality. Titian—I ascend—the venerable father of these and many more, is at times very grand in design. 'The Assumption of the Virgin' is one of the greatest works in painting for ponderous power, driving colour to a height which has nothing at all to rival it. But, oh! what is to be seen here to fulfil what painting ought to and can perform? Nothing. Titian is an old man without imagination in all his works; Tintoretto, a blind Polyphemus; Veronese, a Doge's page." Power and intellect were in truth almost the only qualities he esteemed in art, he cared little for sensuous beauty; therefore, the great Venetian masters had no enchantment for him.

In Florence he sketches in the Chapel of the Medici, and sees "almost all that is noted," and is especially struck with the Pitti Palace, which he calls *The Palace* of Italy; but does not mention any of the paintings in it, being taken up in Florence mostly with Michelangelo. Arrived in Rome, his first impressions are not cheerful. "After a tedious journey from Florence," he writes, "on the 8th of December, 1832, I arrived here, worn, and in need of repose; but I have had none. A week of our home parlour regularity and quiet would dissipate my exhaustion; but Fate has said the first of Rome shall be painful to me. Its glorious fountains scatter cold spray, and its streets are scant of sun. Thus beauties are defects to languor and sickness. I have been unwell: I suppose over-exertion in Bologna, in the damp and wet there, and the change of food—particularly the acid wines—has affected me. For a month I have suffered. Healthlessness, how it benumbs all! I hope it has not affected my notions of what I have seen here. I write this after having been seven days in Rome. I have seen the Colosseum, St. Peter's, the Sistine Chapel—all these mighty things." This last seems said with a sort of sigh of weariness, the old desponding mood having returned with illness; but the next day he makes

acquaintance with many of the artists then in Rome, and takes his place among them at the dinner-table. After some delay, he gets a large studio, and begins to work both at home and in the Academy. Very little in the way of art, however, seems to satisfy him. "The Delphic Sibyl," which he promised to copy for Dyce, whom he met in Venice, is "solidly grand, but imperfect." The "Moses" of Michelangelo falls short of what he had conceived of it, "the head not fine, the beard a stringy mass without truth, the left arm does not belong to the figure." Raphael's "little histories from the Bible are rather trifling things, painted by his pupils, and some of them poor enough." Domenichino, in the famed St. Jerome, "is laborious, and somewhat repulsive." The frescoes of the Sistine are "powerfully executed, but full of defects. They are abounding in deep thought; they are often superficial."

His industry all this time was something prodigious. He constantly worked all day in his studio, and then again in the evening in the Academy. Yet his health was miserably weak, and Rome evidently did not suit him.

"I was never in ill-health," he writes, "till I came here; now I am subdued and broken down, labouring against this continued illness. My hands have swelled, every limb is affected; but still I can walk and paint, and shall continue so to do."

Early in 1833 he began a series of anatomical drawings made from subjects in the hospital of the Incurabile. These drawings have been preserved, and have been shown to me. They are executed with the utmost care, every muscle being accurately drawn, and the body studied in all varieties of position. Few artists, probably, have ever taken so much trouble with this branch of their study.

The result of all this hard work in Rome was the immense picture of "Discord," the mightiest effort of his art, but not, it is to be feared, by any means the most successful. To this great work, which was meant by the rebellion of son against father to typify something like a Titanic overthrow of the old order by the new, he now consecrated all his powers, working unremittingly often for thirteen or fourteen hours a day, and then going out "perfectly ex-

hausted." His models gave him much trouble, and his friends among the artists in Rome were not encouraging; but "I am resolved," he writes, "to lay aside all attempt to please and win attention out of the walk truly fitted for me. There are some to whom a little fancy or a quiet sentiment is the best of art; for, altogether, I must deal with the strong and the real. This picture of 'Discord' is for all countries; I must work for the world, as all should do, or for my own country, Scotland; but whatever is well done for it must be something also for the world." Alas! the world took very little heed of this colossal work, with which he came home laden in the spring of 1834. Even he himself appears to have had some doubts about it, for when it was unpacked, he sat down, his brother tells us, for some time, grimly silent, before it, and then at last exclaimed, "Yes, it was well to persevere; that is the work I must live by." Then, again, "It *is* like the Laocoon; it is drawn as the Laocoon is modelled."

And so, to some extent, it is, being strongly reminiscent of the Laocoon in its composition and spasmodic strength; but, judging merely from the engraving, I should say that it more nearly resembles Volterra in style, or Giulio Romano in his convulsive efforts in the Palazzo del Té. It was exhibited in the Scottish Academy in 1840, together with "Philoctetes left in the Isle of Lemnos," "Cupid Sharpening his Arrows," and "The Crucifixion." In the same year, also, he sent to the Royal Academy of London a more cheerful work, the first of several pictures from subjects in national history which he now painted.

This was "Queen Elizabeth at the Globe Theatre, viewing the Performance of the 'Merry Wives of Windsor'" —a rich composition of many figures, including portraits of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and other men of the time. Such an interesting subject as this might possibly have proved more attractive than the colossal "Discord," and have won popular approval, but, unfortunately, it was hung high, and passed unnoticed. This circumstance, coupled with the rejection, two years before, of his "Achilles addressing the Manes of Patroclus," prevented him from ever sending another work to the London ex-

hibition, with the exception of a small picture of "Pan," which, by some chance, made its appearance in 1845.

This determination, adopted, no doubt, from pride, was much to be regretted, for it prevented his becoming known in the art circles of London, which, far more than those of Edinburgh, were the awarders of fame and profit. But though ardently desiring recognition, he had not the enduring patience and self-trust necessary to wait for it, and to accept, like poor, persevering Etty, endless rebuffs and discouragements on the way. David Scott, like Haydon, chose to imagine himself ill-used—in that the world did not acknowledge his genius at once. Yet he had no cause, as his brother William once shrewdly pointed out to him, to consider himself martyred. "You do not even take your hat from the wall," he writes, "and place it on your head, with ease and carelessness. Your mind is ever awake to pride or degradation, or some other notion, and takes every opportunity to augment its store of pain. . . . . I, for my part," he continues, with a serene philosophy that has borne pleasant fruits in his life, "with what little experience I have had, strive only to be contented. Whatever intellectual work I may do, will be for its own sake; received or rejected by others, it will remain the same to me." It would have been well if David could have felt thus; but this was impossible. His vast efforts needed recognition for their sustainment; and this he had neither the strength to wait for, nor the worldly prudence to attain by more popular works. He does, however, at times appear to have made an attempt towards pleasing the public, as in such works as "Queen Elizabeth at the Globe Theatre," already mentioned; "Peter the Hermit preaching the Crusades;" and "The Alchemist lecturing on the Elixir Vitæ"—large historical pictures, in which the varied life of the middle ages is reflected with thorough understanding and keen appreciation of its picturesque character.

Soon after his return to Scotland, in 1838, he set up a large studio at Easter Daley House, and here, besides the paintings already mentioned, and an altar-piece of "The Descent from the Cross" for the Catholic chapel in Edin-

burgh, he designed and painted a number of other works of historical, classical, and poetical import, most of which were exhibited at the Scotch Academy, where his merits were fully acknowledged.

Among these may be mentioned a picture of "The Duke of Gloucester taken into the Water-gate of Calais," not from its being by any means one of his most important works, but simply from its having been one of the very few that I can speak of from personal knowledge. It was exhibited at the "Old Masters," at Burlington House, in 1875, being lent by R. Carfrae, Esq. It was certainly a picture of striking effect and fine colour, painted with considerable knowledge, and telling its story in a direct, forcible manner, without any help from detail or accessory. It interested me at once, and made me desire to know something more of the painter, with whom I was then wholly unacquainted. This, as well as several of the pictures before mentioned, was comparatively small in size; but in 1841 he again set to work upon a huge canvas, whereon he depicted "Vasco de Gama, the discoverer of India, encountering the Spirit of the Storm as he passes the Cape of Good Hope."

This great picture, now in the Trinity House at Leith, may be regarded as the most matured expression of his art. It occupied the painter for more than two years, and confirmed him in a full belief in his high vocation. It is in truth, judging from the engraving—for unfortunately I have never been able to gain sight of the original—a nobly conceived and powerfully executed work, well calculated by the interest of the subject as well as by its successful treatment to win public favour. But unhappily its exhibition, which was undertaken by the artist himself, was a total failure and brought him a material loss of £70 to add to the pain of disappointed hopes.

More disappointment still awaited him, as it did so many other aspiring artists, with regard to the Cartoon competition for the paintings in the new Houses of Parliament held in 1842. He sent in two designs, one of "Drake witnessing the Destruction of the Armada," and another of "Wallace defending Scotland," but neither attracted

any notice; nor did his fresco designs sent in two years later, though he was one of the few of our English artists who had any knowledge of fresco.

In 1845, confirmed, as it would seem, in his peculiarities of style by repeated failure, he sent to the Scotch Academy a large, and, as it was deemed, utterly outrageous representation of "The Dead Rising," with figures larger than life; "a work to be looked upon once," according to his biographer, "with awe and wonder, not to be imitated, not to be spoken lightly of." From a sketch of it that I have seen, certainly no one was likely to desire to look at such a ghastly horror *more* than once.

In 1847, having meanwhile executed his historical picture of "Peter the Hermit preaching the Crusades," he again gave the reins to his imagination in a work called "The Triumph of Love," in which, in contrast to the awful black and lurid light of "The Dead Rising," he indulged in a perfect riot of colour. The invention displayed in this work was certainly great, but it was regarded by the public with amazement mingled with derision.

His mood of mind while painting these works during these last few years of his life, is sufficiently seen in the following entries at the end of a note-book, which he appears to have opened only once a year:—

"1844. Desolate, and very weary of suspense.

"1845. A gleam of sunshine this year, but again a storm and a night of hail, of sleet, and a long chill.

"1846. Silence, the sullen salve of suffering.

"1847. A broken ray in turbid rain.

"1848. Withering."

These sensational entries almost provoke a smile, although it is to be feared that they reflect only too truly the suffering that his sensitive mind underwent at this time, a suffering greatly augmented by a nervous disease, chiefly affecting the muscles of the neck, that was gradually gaining upon his constitution. It is to this period that his poetical efforts mostly belong. One of these, a long poem, entitled "Trafalgar, or British Deed," he fondly offered for publication, but was doomed to as much disappointment in this respect as in others.

But by far the most poetical work of this time was a series of eighteen astronomical designs, which were published in 1848 as illustrations to a work by Professor Nichols, called "The Architecture of the Heavens." In these highly imaginative illustrations David Scott has given a mystic and metaphysical rendering of astronomical problems in the same manner as in his earlier work, "The Monograms of Man." These later designs have, however, a beauty that is not to be found in the earlier work. He also, during these last years of his life, executed a series of forty highly fanciful and poetical designs for an edition of "The Pilgrim's Progress," which was not published until after his death.

This took place on March 5, 1849, when he was forty-two years of age. During his last illness he often spoke of his views of life and art having grown fuller and simpler than they had been. "It takes a long time," he said, "to know how to live and work."

In person David Scott, as seen in a portrait painted by himself at the age of twenty-five, was the very type of gloomy poetic genius. "The inner man," says his brother, "had fashioned its bodily semblance with extraordinary power and precision. Those who knew him only in the sore decay of his latter end cannot form any conception of the uncommon beauty of his face and form. He was a little above middle size, slender but not emaciated, lean and stript for the contest, but full of vigour tempered by nervous irritability. His face was pale and thin, but lighted up with poetical intelligence."

DANIEL MACLISE.

DANIEL MACLISE, the painter of the two greatest national pictures of which England can boast, was an Irishman by birth, but Scotch as well as Irish by parentage. His father, a Highlander by descent, served as a private soldier in the Elgin Fencibles, and came with that regiment to Cork, where he married in 1797, and where his son Daniel was born, February 2, 1806. Such, at least, is the date given in the register of the old Presbyterian Church (now the Unitarian) in Cork, and there is every reason to believe it correct, though Maclise himself gave it as January 25, 1811, and most of his biographers have adopted his statement,[1] His father would seem to have left the army while his children were still young, and to have set up in a small way in Cork as shoemaker or cobbler. The family were undoubtedly very poor, and young Daniel could only have received the plainest education. His desire for knowledge, however, and his early love of reading supplied the deficiencies of his school training, and his taste for art becoming quickly apparent, he soon began to distinguish himself. In 1820, at the age of fourteen, he got a situation as teller in Newenham's bank in Cork; but here, as at school, he was more occupied with drawing sketches on the blotting-paper than in attending to business: so that one day his master said to him, "Well, Dan, you may possibly make a good artist, but you will never make a good banker;" and kindly let the boy go to follow his own

[1] It has been surmised that the date in the register referred to an elder brother of the name of Daniel, who might have died young; but this is not likely. Many facts, indeed, in his history tend to prove, as I hope to show, that 1806 is far more likely than 1811 to have been the true date.

bent, which led him to enter a School of Art at that time just opened in Cork.

The dates in Maclise's early life are very vague, but this Cork School of Art was not founded until 1822; therefore it is impossible that he could have entered before this date. He was then probably sixteen years of age, though his biographer, O'Driscoll, makes him only sixteen in 1828, when he entered the schools of the Royal Academy. But the success he had achieved for himself in Cork before he arrived in London makes this very unlikely. It was remarkable even for a young man of twenty-two, but quite incredible for a boy of sixteen.

His first success came through a portrait of Sir Walter Scott, drawn by him in 1825, when the great author was travelling in Ireland. Scott happened while in Cork to visit the shop of a Mr. Bolster, a bookseller, and here young Maclise managed, unobserved, to make a successful sketch of him. This was shown by Bolster the next day to Sir Walter and his friends, who were much struck by it, and Sir Walter, with the kindness that ever marked his behaviour, took especial notice of the artist, and prophesied that he would one day become eminent. He also wrote his name at the foot of the sketch, which was afterwards lithographed, and became very popular, five hundred copies being sold as soon as struck off.

Maclise at this time was making brilliant progress at the Cork Academy, where he was a fellow-student with Samuel Ford, a young painter of most ambitious aims, but who died, unfortunately, in 1828, at the age of twenty-three, before the world could recognize his genius. He studied also at a school of anatomy in Cork kept by a celebrated surgeon, Dr. Woodroffe, who kindly admitted all the students of the Cork School of Art without payment. Here his progress attracted the attention of a Mr. Sainthill, a man learned in archæological pursuits, and who had a large library filled with works on legendary and antiquarian subjects. To this Maclise had admittance, and soon acquired a taste for such studies. Through Mr. Sainthill, also, he got introduced to Crofton Croker, who had just published his "Fairy Legends of Ireland," and

Maclise was so charmed with this book that he at once set about designing a series of illustrations to it, which were published in the second edition.

Croker was a useful friend for Maclise to have made, and both he and Mr. Sainthill promised him their help and influence if he now chose to go to London and enter at the Royal Academy. This, however, with rare independence, he steadily refused to do until he had gained sufficient to support himself during his student period. He seems, indeed, unlike poor Haydon, to have early formed the wise resolution never to accept of any pecuniary aid from friends, and though several offered to bear the expenses of his study in London, he continued taking portraits in Cork until he conceived he had a sufficient sum in hand to warrant his devoting himself to painting. His portraits were highly esteemed in Cork, and he executed a great many, at the price at first of a guinea and a-half for a small pencil sketch of about nine inches by seven, but this price was afterwards raised to five guineas. One knows his skill in later days in this kind of work, and can well believe that the good people of Cork, before photography was in vogue, found it satisfactory to their vanity to be thus represented by their clever young countryman. The studio which he had taken in Patrick Street soon after the Sir Walter Scott episode, was generally crowded with sitters, and he had often to devote his nights as well as his days to finishing the likenesses he had undertaken. At first he used to work these up very minutely, bestowing an immense amount of labour on the backgrounds and accessories; but as his practice increased his style became bolder, and he gave up backgrounds altogether, in spite of the predilections of his sitters for being set in what they considered appropriate surroundings.

In the summer of 1826, leaving for a time this weary work of portraiture, he went on a pleasant walking tour with a friend through Wicklow, filling his sketch-books with numerous sketches of the romantic scenery of that county, and storing his mind with all its fanciful legends. Maclise was a good walker, a man of strong frame and great strength of muscle, which he increased by the practice of

athletic exercises and sports; moreover, he was an exceedingly handsome young fellow, with fine expressive eyes, straight nose, and broad, intellectual forehead, over which fell a mass of dark curls, such as we see in the portrait he drew of himself in 1829. Add to this that he was modest, unassuming, and yet perfectly frank and sociable; that he possessed the rare faculty of humour; and that he had a certain charm of manner that attracted every one towards him, and we have a fascinating picture of the young Irish artist, who, having achieved by his own exertions in portraiture a sufficient sum to meet his expenses, came to London in July, 1827, to enter upon a course of study at the Academy Schools.

But before he could do this an incident occurred which resulted in making him known in the London world, just as his portrait of Sir Walter Scott had done before in the narrower limits of the Cork world. It happened soon after his arrival, that Charles Kean, then a boy of sixteen, made his *début* on the London stage in the character of young Norval in Home's tragedy of "Douglas." Though his acting was by no means remarkable, yet the young actor himself excited great interest; and Maclise, who was present at the performance, contrived to make a successful sketch of him as he stood bowing to the audience. This was lithographed the next day, and sold so well that Maclise realized quite a large sum by it. It also led to his becoming known as a rising young artist, and commissions for portraits soon found him out in the lodgings he had taken above the shop of a carver and gilder in Newman Street. These, however, he now cared less about executing, for he was intent upon practising a higher style of art.

Although he had sent from Cork, as early as March, 1826, a highly-finished drawing to Somerset House, as a candidate for admission into the Academy Schools, he did not really enter these, as I find by the books of the Royal Academy, until April 20, 1828, when his age, as given by himself, is stated to have been twenty. This would make the year of his birth 1808, which neither agrees with his own subsequent statement, nor with the date given in the

register. In any case, however, he could not have been more than two-and-twenty at this time, and being wholly without any growth of hair on his face, probably looked much younger, and perhaps amused himself by allowing it to be supposed that he was so.

His success in the Academy Schools was brilliant and immediate. He carried off all the prizes at every competition, and in 1829 became Gold Medallist of the year by virtue of his historical composition, "The Choice of Hercules." His own feelings on this occasion are described in a letter to a friend, in which he tells how, on the occasion of the prize-giving, when Sir M. A. Shee, the president, began to address the successful candidate, he did not let it be known, for full a quarter of an hour, which of "the trembling seven," who sat on the seat before him, was the subject of his discourse. "Never," writes Maclise, "was praise felt to be more momentous; for my part, I don't recollect one word *but my own name, which completed it!*"

"When the decision was known," he goes on to relate, "the clapping of hands from the roomful was not unpleasant to my ears, as it displayed a general feeling in my favour. I have since heard, from good authority, that all the members voted for me." He was, indeed, one of the most popular students ever known in the Royal Academy, and seems, from the first, to have had the delightful faculty of winning all hearts to himself. His fellow-students adored him. "Of dear, glorious Maclise," writes Mr. J. C. Horsley, R.A.,[1] with enthusiastic warmth, "it is impossible to speak too highly in many ways. A more noble, generous-hearted man never lived. I first saw and knew him when I was a young student of the Academy, aged fourteen, and he a Gold Medallist, and becoming known as a painter, aged twenty. A handsomer fellow could not have been seen; and his generous, rollicking humour shone like sunlight on all around him. He was the delight of all societies, but he never saw friends at his own house. All we young fry used to look up to him with devoted reverence. I may say emphatically that Maclise never

[1] In a letter kindly giving me his reminiscences of several artists whom he had known.

had an enemy, and no one could be more regretted than he was in the Academy."

He was equally beloved in the brilliant circle of literary friends wherein he now began to move. On coming to London he had been most kindly received by Mr. Crofton Croker, whose acquaintance, as we have seen, he had made at Mr. Sainthill's, in Cork. This gentleman was well acquainted with most of the literary celebrities of that period, who were accustomed to meet at his house in pleasant social intercourse. Here, and at the Carter Halls', who likewise delighted in literary gatherings, Maclise met such well-known writers as Tom Moore, Samuel Rogers, Miss Edgeworth, the Rev. R. H. Barham (Ingoldsby), Theodore Hook, Sam Lover, Mahony (Father Prout), Miss Landon, Jerdan, the editor of the "Literary Gazette," who soon became his warm friend, and last, but by no means least, the ponderous John Forster, who, in his own estimation at all events, formed the solid substratum of the brilliant but somewhat frivolous society in which he moved. Through Forster, Maclise was in due time introduced to Dickens; but, before dwelling on the pleasant intimacy of this trio of friends, we must see what he had accomplished by this time in the way of painting.

By virtue of his having won the Gold Medal, the highest distinction of the Academy, he was entitled also to the Travelling Studentship, which would have afforded him the means for a three years' course of study in Italy. But he was at this time (1831) already making a position for himself in London, and therefore decided, and probably wisely, that it was better to hold on his course here than to turn aside for the sake of the study of the great masters of Italy, a study that is as often productive of evil as of good to youthful genius. Before this, as early indeed as 1829, he had exhibited his first work at the Royal Academy. This was a water-colour drawing of "Malvolio affecting the Count," from "Twelfth Night," a play from which he afterwards took his celebrated picture in the National Gallery of "Malvolio and the Countess." O'Driscoll assumes that these two paintings were the same, and speaks of the Vernon Gallery "Malvolio" as being the first work

he exhibited; but this was not the case, the picture that was bought by Mr. Vernon not having been exhibited until 1840.[1]

In 1830 Maclise exhibited no fewer than seven works at the Royal Academy, mostly portraits, and painted in water-colour. Among these were his portraits of Miss Landon, Mrs. S. C. Hall, and Thomas Campbell, afterwards engraved for the series of "Fraser" portraits.

After the exhibition of this year, and the hard work it must have entailed in preparing for it, Maclise sought relaxation by a little trip to Paris, arriving there in July, 1830, directly after the revolution that placed Louis Philippe on the throne, and while the horrors of the "three days" were fresh in memory. In spite of the unsettled times, however, he managed to see the Louvre, Luxembourg, and other galleries, and then set off with a friend for a walking tour in the south, intending to cross the Pyrenees and visit Spain. Unfortunately, before he could accomplish this he was taken ill, and was obliged to return to England.

During the winter of 1830-31, he was still busy with portraiture, but in 1832 he made his first appearance in oils in the picture of "Puck Disenchanting Bottom; Oberon and Titania Reconciled." This was followed by his well-known "Snap-Apple Night, or All-Hallow Eve in Ireland," a picture for which he had gathered the materials during a visit to Ireland in the preceding summer.

This picture is so well known by means of the engraving that it need not be described here. It lacks the thorough sympathy with peasant life and character that we find so strongly pronounced in Wilkie's pictures of the same class, nor has it anything like the careful finish that Wilkie bestowed upon his works; but it is nevertheless a pleasantly conceived scene, full of life and movement. Several of the principal figures in it are portraits. The two girls are the handsome sisters of the artist; and Sir Walter Scott is also introduced, as well as Crofton Croker, who accompanied

[1] The early picture of "Malvolio" does not include the Countess. It represents the scene where Maria throws down the letter, and Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek are in hiding, watching its effect.

Maclise in this trip to Ireland. The old priest who is seen in the background, compelling two of his turbulent parishioners to lay down their shillelahs, was a well-known character in the place.

In the same year (1833) Maclise exhibited at the British Institution a smaller picture from a subject taken from "Lalla Rookh," "Mokanna Unveiling his Features to Zelica." Whether from the popularity of the subject at that time, or from the real talent of the painter, this picture excited even more attention than the "All-Hallow Eve," and the two together greatly raised the reputation of the artist, who before had only been known as a clever young portrait-painter. Yet the unveiled prophet was not a pleasant subject to choose for a picture, and certainly Maclise's treatment of it does not make it less repulsive.[1] The whole scene is theatrical and forced, the colour crude, and the effect produced one of disgust rather than of powerful emotion.

The next year came a far greater work than any he had yet achieved; a work, indeed, in which his remarkable powers are seen fully developed. In "The Installation of Captain Rock," Maclise has progressed from the clever young painter to the accomplished artist. His student years are over, and it is as a master that we must now recognize him. His conception of the picturesque and grotesque elements of the scene he here depicts, the life and movement he throws into it, his management of light and shade, his recognition of peculiarities of character, are all indeed masterly; even his colour in this picture is far richer and warmer than is usual with him, according more truly with the character of the scene than if he had painted it in his usual cold, brilliant tones. The subject was taken from the "Tipperary Tales," and the following descriptive quotation appeared in the Royal Academy Catalogue:—

"Amid the tears and lamentations of women, Delaney advanced to the tomb in which the murdered man was laid, and, placing his right hand upon the body, swore to revenge his death. Ere his solemn vow was thrice re-

[1] This picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition in 1875. It was then the property of Thomas Ashton, Esq.

peated a hunchback mendicant had elevated himself upon the shoulders of one of the heterogeneous assemblage, and, with the old military cap worn by the former leader of the faction, crowned Delaney as 'Captain Rock,' muttering, 'Upon this Rock I will build my church,' while the Buccough, unbuckling his wooden leg, flourished it, with a deep shout that for a moment stilled the groups which had collected within the ruins of the Abbey, and, to use the words of Cowper, were agitated like

> "'The working of a sea
> Before a calm that *rocks* itself to rest.'"[1]

Of a totally different class of subject was the brilliant mediæval scene, called "The Chivalric Vow of the Ladies and the Peacock," which appeared in the Royal Academy in 1835. This was painted with all the pomp of dress and circumstance belonging to the age of chivalry, and certainly made a fine effect.

The subject was thus explained in the Academy Catalogue: "Between the courses of the repast, two damsels entered the hall, advancing to the sound of solemn minstrelsy, and bearing the peacock, roasted in its feathers, in a golden dish, to each knight in succession, who made his vow, and sanctioned his resolution by appealing to God and the Virgin Mary, the Ladies and the Peacock. The dish was then placed on the table, and the lord of the festival deputed some renowned knight to carve it in such a manner that each might partake."[2]

This gorgeous painting was the only one exhibited by Maclise in 1835, but it won him his election as Associate, he and his friend Mr. Solomon Hart, the present venerable librarian of the Royal Academy, having been elected together in November, 1835.

His address at this time, as given in the R.A. catalogues, was 63, Upper Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. Up to

[1] This picture, when exhibited at Burlington House in 1875, was in the possession of W. J. Alt, Esq. It was stated in the catalogue to have been painted in 1834, but retouched in 1845. It is in size 65 inches by 94.

[2] Saint Palaye and others, "Histoire de Chivalrie."

this date he would seem always to have signed his name M'Clise or McClise,[1] but now, for some reason, he altered the form of it to Maclise. It is so signed for the first time in the R.A. catalogue for 1836, in which he appears in the list of Associates as "Daniel Maclise." In this year he exhibited "Macbeth and the Weird Sisters," Macready serving him as a model for his Macbeth; and a fine historical picture—"The Interview between Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell." In 1827 he was ready with no fewer than seven works, principally portraits, but including one of his cleverest subject pictures, "The Bohemian Gypsies." In 1828, an especially fertile year, he exhibited, besides two studies of figures and game, three of his most popular works, namely, "Olivia and Sophia fitting out Moses for the Fair," so well known by the engraving by Lumb Stocks;[2] "Salvator Rosa painting his friend Masaniello," and "Merry Christmas in the Baron's Hall." Inspired probably by the contagious jollity of this latter picture, he also described Christmas with his pen about this time, in a long poem entitled "Christmas Revels: an Epic Rhapsody, in twelve duans," which appeared in "Fraser's Magazine" in May, 1838, under the signature of Alfred Croquis.

"And Michaelmas and Hallow e'en
Has each his merriment, I ween;
And many more than I can name
To joy and jollity lay claim:
Gladdening the heart as they appear,
Like stars to light us through the year;
Till breaks upon our view the light
That issues from the Christmas night.
The sky of life would be but dark
If stars like these withheld their spark;
But, shining through this life-long night,
They give us glimpses of the light.

[1] This circumstance has led some writers to suppose that he did not exhibit at the R.A. until 1836, they not having recognized his name under its early form. The name McLish, McClise, Maclise, seems, indeed, to have been as variable as we find names to have been in former times, and has tended like everything else to confuse the records of the family.

[2] The original picture is in the possession of Mr. John Clow, of Liverpool.

Blessings of peace and joy we call
On festive days, whene'er they fall,
But be more bounteously supplied
Above the rest to Christmas tide.
Then room for Christmas, ivy-crown'd;
No merry days like his are found!
Room, room for Christmas, crown'd with holly;
No other days are half so jolly!"

It was about this period that Maclise was introduced by Forster to Charles Dickens, and the congeniality of spirit that existed between the great artist and the great novelist soon made them close and firm friends. "Mac," as Dickens ever calls him, was henceforth always a necessary element in those pleasant social evenings, merry excursions, and exciting first readings that made up so much of the enjoyment of Dickens's life, and "Mac" evidently contributed largely to the humour and fun of those delightful meetings. Here is a sketch of him in 1838, when Dickens had taken a little cottage for the summer at Twickenham, where Thackeray, Jerrold, Talfourd, and many other of his friends were often to be found assembled, and where the "social charm of Maclise was seldom wanting:"—"Nor was there anything," writes Forster, in his Life of Dickens, "that exercised a greater fascination over Dickens than the grand enjoyment of idleness, the ready self-abandonment to the luxury of laziness which we both so laughed at in Maclise, under whose easy swing of indifference, always the most amusing at the most aggravating events and times, we knew that there was artist work as eager, energy as unwearying, and observation almost as penetrating as Dickens's own. A greater enjoyment than the fellowship of Maclise at this period it would be difficult to imagine. Dickens hardly saw more than he did, while yet he seemed to be seeing nothing; and the small esteem in which this rare faculty was held by himself, a quaint oddity that gave to shrewdness itself in him an air of Irish simplicity, his unquestionable turn for literature, and a varied knowledge of it not always connected with such intense love and such unwearied practice of one special and absorbing art, combined to render him attractive far beyond the common. His fine genius and

his handsome person, of neither of which at any time he seemed himself to be in the slightest degree conscious, completed the charm."

One of the first-fruits of this pleasant intimacy was the production of the well-known portrait of Dickens at the age of twenty-seven, which was first engraved as a frontispiece for an edition of "Nicholas Nickleby," and afterwards by Mr. Robert Graves, A.R.A., for Forster's "Life." A delicate outline steel engraving of it by C. H. Jeens, giving not only the head but the whole figure, is also given in the same work. "As a likeness," Thackeray once remarked, "it is perfectly amazing. A looking-glass could not render a better facsimile. We have here the real, identical man Dickens, the inward as well as the outward of him." [1]

This mention of Maclise's rare skill in seizing likenesses brings us to the consideration of the remarkable series of portraits of living celebrities that, under the *nom de crayon* of Alfred Croquis, he contributed to "Fraser's Magazine."

These *character portraits*, as they are now called, form indeed a complete pictorial history of the genius of that brilliant literary time. Here we see reflected, with a truth that, as Thackeray well says, reveals the inward nature as well as the outward semblance, such men as S. T. Coleridge, lost in vague, mournful thought; William

[1] This portrait was painted by Maclise in 1839, and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1840. A pleasant contest took place between the artist and his friend as to the payment for it. Nothing had been mentioned between them, when the portrait was begun, on this subject; but when it was finished Dickens sent Maclise a cheque for the amount he considered due. This, however, was at once returned. "My dear Dickens," writes Maclise, "how could *you* think of sending me a cheque for what was to me a matter of gratification! I am almost inclined to be offended with you. May I not be permitted to give some proof of the value I attach to your friendship? I return the cheque, and regret that you should have thought it necessary to send it to yours faithfully, Daniel Maclise." Dickens, however, in another letter, entreats him to take it, saying, "I am willing to be your debtor for anything else in the whole wide range of your art, as you shall very readily find whenever you put me to the proof;" but he adds, "I entreat you not to disturb me in this matter." How the dispute ended is not recorded. The original painting is now in the possession of the Rev. Sir E. R. Joddrell.

Wordsworth, serenely beneficent; Thomas Campbell, seated amidst books and papers, enjoying the solace of a long pipe; Thomas Carlyle, with mouth not yet set to "chew granite," but who had already proclaimed the Sanctity of Labour, and whom we recognize, even at this early period, as one "toiling invariably for the highest," for the "spiritually indispensable;" genial Charles Lamb, a quaint old figure, peering, by the light of two candles, into his big tomes, and looking something like a wise old monkey who, while enjoying the sweets of literature, has taken care also to have a little sweetness in the way of hot toddy to wash them down.

Here also we have Bulwer Lytton, of the "Pelham" type, looking at himself in a glass; Béranger, the softest and sweetest of old gentlemen, with pineapple, grapes, and champagne by his side, and a whole rack of *billets-doux* on the wall; Isaac Disraeli the elder, and Benjamin Disraeli the younger, in about the "Vivian Grey" stage of politics and dandyism; the savage Maginn; the tartan-clad Hogg; the fascinating Miss Landon (L. E. L.); Mrs. Norton; the Countess of Blessington; Jane Porter, and many others of the lady authors of the day, who are also all drawn together, sipping their tea, in the plate called "Regina's Maids of Honour," as are also all the male Fraserians, who are seen partaking of more convivial refreshment while listening to an after-dinner speech by Maginn. Maginn it was who wrote the letterpress that accompanied these plates, which was not always, it must be admitted, in the best of taste. Personalities were frequently indulged in, at that time, in literature; and Maginn was not likely to be sparing in them. Many of the portraits also are absurdly caricatured, but others appear perfectly serious, the exact presentment of the every-day aspect of the sitter.[1]

[1] The Fraser Gallery began in 1830 with the portrait of William Jerdan, and ended in December, 1836, with that of William Buckstone. There was an attempt made to revive it in 1838, but the few sketches then issued were by W. Forrester (Alfred Crowquill), not Maclise (Alfred Croquis). The portraits have recently been reproduced and issued in a volume by Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

Mr. D. G. Rossetti, criticizing these portraits in the "Academy" (vol. ii. 1871), bestows the highest praise upon Maclise's artistic skill. "Both in rendering of character," he writes, "whether in its first aspect or subtler shades, and in the unfailing knowledge of form which seizes at once on the movement of the body beneath the clothes, and on the lines of the clothes themselves, these drawings are on an incalculably higher level than the works of even the best professional sketchers. Indeed, no happier instance could well be found of the unity for literal purposes of what may justly be termed 'style' with an incisive and relishing realism."

In February, 1840, Maclise was made R.A. This was about the most productive period of his art. To it belong the powerful "Banquet Scene in Macbeth," the "Scene from Gil Blas," "The Countess and Malvolio," in the National Gallery, and the famous "Play Scene in Hamlet," exhibited with two other works in 1842. This last picture, though one of his best-known works, is by no means one of his greatest. The situation is conceived from a theatric rather than a poetic point of view. The action is too strained, the passion too apparent to be true to nature. It is, in fact, just such an interpretation of Shakespeare as might be expected from a clever but not really great actor, for we recognize it all through as acting; it does not rise, as conceivably it might, into a tragic embodiment of human emotion.

And the same may be said of many other of Maclise's works. They savour too much of the footlights and green baize. They startle us by the display of passion and violent action. They deal in powerful sensation and dramatic effect, and thus fall short of the calm dignity of truly great art, wherein, as in life itself, the strong currents of joy, sorrow, and even crime, are seldom visible upon the mere surface of the stream. Maclise's love of the theatre, and his intimate friendship with Macready, the other "Mac" of the Dickens set, very possibly had something to do with this theatric tendency in his art. Of course he painted Macready several times in character, but even when not doing so, it is very possible that the image of

this remarkable actor may, almost unconsciously, have remained with him; so that in conceiving a dramatic subject he could not help picturing Macready as a portion of it, and thus fell into copying art instead of nature. This is, of course, not true of all his pictures. In the earlier, this theatric effect had not been gained; there is nothing of it, for instance, in the "Installation of Captain Rock," a highly dramatic subject, and in his later ones it had been overcome. It is mostly apparent in the middle period of his art, and especially in such pictures as "The Play Scene in Hamlet," "The Banquet Scene in Macbeth," "Gil Blas," "Sabrina," and "The Ordeal by Touch."

In the same year that he exhibited the "Hamlet," Maclise, with his three friends Forster, Dickens, and Stanfield, went on that glorious ever-to-be-remembered trip to Cornwall, already described in the life of Stanfield (see page 333), of which Dickens retained such a lively memory. Maclise, writing of it years afterwards to Forster, says:—"Don't I still see the Logan stone and you perched on the giddy top, while we, rocking it on its pivot, shrank from all that lay concealed below! Should I ever have blundered on the waterfall of St. Wighton, if you had not piloted the way? And when we got to Land's End, with the green sea far under us lapping into solitary rocky nooks where the mermaids live, who but you only had the courage to stretch over to see those diamond jets of brightness that I swore then and believe still were the flappings of their tails!"

A painting of the waterfall here mentioned appeared in the next year's Academy, and may now be seen in the South Kensington Museum, for it was bought by Dickens under a feigned name before the exhibition was opened, and, having been purchased by Forster at Dickens's death, became part of the Forster bequest. The girl at the waterfall is a portrait of a member of the Dickens family. With this he exhibited also the "Actor's Reception of the Author."

After the exhibition of the next year, 1844, Maclise took another little holiday trip to Paris, from whence he writes to Forster: "I am choke-full up to my eyes in pictures. I

never saw so much in all my life put together. . . . I have had a perfect surfeit of art, and have once or twice sworn to myself to give up all thoughts of it, and not commit the sin of adding one more picture to the embarrassing number with which the world is laden. My belief is, that we in London are the smallest and most wretched set of snivellers that ever took pencil in hand; and I feel that I could not mention a single name with full confidence were I called upon to name one of our artists in comparison with theirs."

It is very probable that this visit to Paris made him discontented with the puny productions of English painting, and led, when the opportunity soon after occurred, to his renouncing the historic-*genre* style in which he had hitherto been content to paint, in favour of the lofty historic style in which so many of the great French works of that day were conceived. He had an immense admiration for Paul Delaroche; so great, indeed, that he records he went so often to see his grand work in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, that the custodian, gratified by his admiration, at last refused to receive any more fees from such a constant visitor.

His resolution of not adding any more to the world's "embarrassing number" of pictures was adhered to for a time, for in 1845, for the first time since 1829, his name was missing from the Academy lists. He seems, indeed, about this time to have formed the resolution to forego for a space the small triumphs of the arena, in order to press forward upon a more arduous path.

Before this, indeed, he had already entered as a competitor in those disappointing Cartoon exhibitions that tempted so many artists to expend their energies in the hope of being chosen for the great national work of decorating the New Houses of Parliament with monumental paintings. Two designs, emblematical of the "Spirit of Justice" and the "Spirit of Chivalry," were sent by Maclise, and after much wearying delay he was commissioned to paint these subjects in the arches behind the Strangers' Gallery in the Throne Room, where his noble personifications of these two abstract virtues still remain, though so effectually out of sight that the crowds of

visitors who pass through this splendid apartment every Saturday are for the most part only made aware of their existence by the miserable lithographs of them given in the guide-book.

In 1851 he again came forward with a rich historical subject for exhibition at the Academy—"Caxton showing his Printing-press to Edward IV."—now at South Kensington. This was the greatest effort he had yet made in historical painting, and in many respects it is a noble one, though somehow not altogether satisfactory; one cannot help feeling disappointed that a painter who could give us so much should not have given us still more. One of the chief reasons that it fails to enlist our sympathies is, it seems to me, because the artist himself painted it without enthusiasm. It is strange that with such an enthusiastic temperament as Maclise's, with such a strong sense of humour as he possessed, neither warmth of feeling nor humour are ever very apparent in his painted works. "All is placid and perfect" with his art; for even in his most genial subjects he is never betrayed into any personal expression of feeling, any little touch of nature to "make the whole world kin." Take his "Vicar of Wakefield" subjects, for instance, and compare them with Mulready's paintings from the same story, and the difference will be at once perceived. It is not only that Mulready's colour transcends Maclise's as sunlight does moonlight, but also that Mulready enters heartily into the humour of the scene he depicts, whereas Maclise regards it from the point of view of an unconcerned spectator. And if this want of sympathy is observable in these subjects, still more is it in his more stately historical works, such as this of "Caxton in Westminster Abbey," and "The Marriage of Eva and Strongbow," which followed in 1854. This latter great historical picture has recently been presented by Sir Richard Wallace to the National Gallery of Ireland, the most fitting place that could be found for it. It is a grandly conceived and excellently composed work, and one well adapted for wall-painting. It was, indeed, proposed that he should paint this subject in fresco in the Painted Chamber of the House of Lords, but the payment

offered was so utterly disproportionate to the labour that Maclise declined.

It might, perhaps, have been better for him personally, though not for his ultimate fame, had he also declined the two great works he now undertook; but it was at his own especial request that the two opposite walls, each forty-eight feet long, in what is called the Royal Gallery, at Westminster, were now assigned to him.

Haydon, also, as we have seen, was always longing for some such opportunity for displaying his powers; but it may be doubted, though his exclusion was very hard, whether he would have made a right and noble use of any space that might have been allotted to him in the Houses of Parliament. He was too much a painter of impulse, too dashing and reckless, to be trusted with such grave work; but Maclise, with all his brilliant gifts, was a man of steady purpose, great knowledge, and whose imagination was well under the control of his reason. No painter of the time, indeed, was so admirably fitted by nature and training for the work he now undertook.

His first proposition with regard to this work is to be found in a letter to Sir Charles Eastlake, the Secretary of the Royal Commission, dated July 14, 1857. In this letter, after stating that he has found on inquiry that the subjects selected for the Royal Gallery at Westminster have not yet been appropriated, he proceeds to request that he may be permitted to undertake the execution of them in fresco, in accordance with the plan laid down in the Report. "The various compartments reserved for them in the Royal Gallery, I have," he says, "within the last few days, carefully examined. I have convinced myself that the subjects embraced in this particular series are those which I might hope to execute more worthily than any other still unappropriated; and, if the Commissioners accede to my proposal, I am prepared henceforth to devote myself to the work until the whole of it shall be accomplished."

It was in March, 1858, that he began the cartoon for the "Wellington and Blucher." The size of this was so great (45 ft. 8 in.) that he was obliged to divide it into

compartments, which, Mr. O'Driscoll says, were executed separately on the wall of his drawing-room in Russell Place. No one would suspect these divisions as the cartoon now appears, for there is not the least break in the sequence of the composition.[1] This noble work—the grandest effort of the kind that had ever been made in England—called forth the enthusiasm of Maclise's brother artists to such an extent that they testified their admiration and "honest pride in its success" by presenting the artist with a gold porte-crayon, which was left at his door one morning, with a letter signed by thirty-eight of the most distinguished English artists of the day.

This recognition by his fellows must have been a great source of gratification to Maclise amid all the difficulties in which he now found himself involved. Pure fresco-painting, which necessitates that each day's work should be finished before the mortar sets, is a process that few modern artists have ever dealt with successfully. Maclise found its difficulties so great when he began upon the wall of the Royal Gallery, "with cross lights flashing through the stained glass windows," and other disadvantages hindering his work, that, after several attempts, he became "disheartened and distressed," and wrote to the Commissioners resigning his commission. Prince Albert, however, would by no means allow of this, and in a very urgent letter to Sir Charles Eastlake, he begs him to "try and inspire Maclise with the prospect of this great result, and to make him endure the penance and artistic fasting which are to ensure him the entrance into the artist's paradise—fame." So urged from high quarters, Maclise's objections gave way, and he consented to go to Berlin to study the method of "Stereochromy," or water-glass painting, invented by Dr. Fuchs, of Munich, and which had been used successfully by Kaulbach and others at Berlin.

He accordingly went to Berlin in August, 1859, and, on

[1] This cartoon now hangs in the upper gallery of Burlington House, it having been bought by the Royal Academy at Maclise's sale for £200.

his return, published a valuable report on the water-glass process, in which process he at once set about painting the "Blucher and Wellington."

This painting is usually spoken of as representing the *meeting* of Wellington and Blucher, and many captious critics have amused themselves by pointing out inaccuracies in it; but in reality it represents, not the meeting, but the *parting* of the two great commanders after their interview. Maclise himself always spoke of it as the "*Intervieu* between Wellington and Blucher."

But though wonderfully accurate in detail, Maclise never intended this work, we may be sure, as an actual rendering of the scene. Rather, as in all truly great art, he presents to us, not the petty circumstance of the moment, though this also finds a place, but the whole outcome of a glorious struggle, wherein the liberty of nations has been bravely asserted. We see the price that has been paid by the dying that lie around, not probably an actual feature of the scene, but introduced so as to heighten its powerful dramatic effect.

About the time that the "Wellington and Blucher" was finished, namely, in December, 1861, the Prince Consort died, who had helped to sustain Maclise's courage all through it, by the interest and pleasure he took in his painting. With him seemed to die all the national enthusiasm that the scheme of decorating the Houses of Parliament had called forth. Maclise was, it is true, allowed to proceed with his painting of "Nelson" on the opposite wall to the "Wellington," but very little notice was now taken of him or his achievements. Nevertheless he went on steadily painting, finishing the "Nelson" about the beginning of the year 1865.

Now came the vexatious question of payment. The Commissioners had originally agreed to give Maclise £3,500 for each of his two great paintings. This was straightforward enough; but they had, moreover, commissioned him to fill sixteen small compartments in the gallery with paintings of historical subjects, at an agreed price of £1,000 each, and none of these were as yet executed. In a similar way Mr. J. R. Herbert, R.A., had also

been entrusted with nine compartments in the Peers' Robing Room; but in the ten years stipulated for their completion, only one—his large painting of "Moses descending from the Mount"—was finished. Under these circumstances, the Commissioners, whose enthusiasm, as before said, was now abated, saw a way to getting out of their bargain. They agreed to pay Mr. Herbert £3,000, in addition to the £2,000 he had already received for his one work, on the understanding that he should give up the eight others that were still to be accomplished; and to Maclise, on the same condition, that he should give up the commission for the other compartments in the Royal Gallery, they agreed to pay £5,000 each for his great wall-paintings instead of the £3,500 originally agreed. There does not, it must be said, seem any great hardship in these conditions; the only point of unfairness that can be alleged being that Mr. Herbert had received £1,800 on account of three designs he had made for the other paintings commissioned of him; whereas Maclise, who had also made three highly finished designs for the three subjects—"Marlborough at Blenheim," "Queen Elizabeth at Tilbury," and "Blake at Tunis,"—and had besides prepared sketches for the remainder, never received one penny for all this work,[1] which must have taken him away from profitable commissions, for during the eight years that he was painting in the Houses of Parliament, his whole heart and soul were so entirely set upon his work there that he neglected everything else.

He would remain, I am told, from early morning until late in the evening, painting unremittingly, without even stopping in the middle of the day for luncheon, which he used to say was "demoralizing;" working in painful positions, with his "nose glued to the wall," and until the gloom of that "gloomy hall," as he called the famed Royal Gallery, entered into his very soul, and caused a depression of spirits which his friends marked with pain in one for-

[1] Mr. O'Driscoll affirms that Maclise never received the increase of payment promised him on account of the "Wellington," but I can scarcely believe this. If he did not, the money, £1,500, must be still owing to his heirs.

merly so light-hearted and gay. All, perhaps, would yet have been well had his work, when finished, met with the recognition it deserved; but, instead of this, the Royal Commission, as before said, seemed only to care about getting out of their bargain for more paintings by his hand; and the unwonted enthusiasm that was evinced at first when the cartoon exhibitions were held at Westminster Hall having subsided, the public also took little heed of the two great national paintings that were the outcome of all the effort and excitement that had been evoked on the subject of monumental decoration. Such works were not, in truth, of a kind, any more than Raphael's paintings in the Vatican, to appeal to popular favour. It needs some effort to understand their meaning, to perceive their poetic significance; and this effort is just what most persons refuse to make for the sake of a work of art. They expect it to please their sense at once, like a pleasant melody, without giving them any trouble in estimating its fuller harmonies.

Nor did the appreciation of critics make up to Maclise for this coldness on the part of the public. Many, of course, recognized the noble character of these paintings; and several articles appeared, especially in the "Athenæum," giving them high praise; but writers in general dwelt more on the petty faults of detail and execution, vexing the artist's mind by pointing out little inaccuracies of circumstance or costume in which he was usually in the end proved to have been right, instead of attempting to fathom the true meaning of his work.

One critique in particular wounded him to the quick, wherein a well-known art critic in the "Times" directed the British public to enter the Houses of Parliament, and to keep straight on, "turning to look neither to the right nor the left," until they came to Herbert's great picture in the Peers' Robing Room, upon which the writer bestowed the highest encomiums, being well aware that by following his directions the public would have to pass Maclise's two pictures "on the right and on the left" before they reached it.

And yet these two paintings are works of which a nation

might well be proud. They are, in truth, two great national epics, such as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo were once called upon to paint on the walls of the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence. The world has never ceased lamenting the loss of those two great works of olden date, but for the most part it passes unheeded these similar works of modern times. It seems bold, perhaps, to compare Maclisé with the two supreme Florentine masters, but even though it be admitted that his paintings fall far short of what we may conceive theirs to have been from the fragments and traditions that have come down to us, it is certain that they deserved a warmer recognition than they met with. In olden times, indeed, the accomplishment of these national wall-paintings would have seemed a fitting subject for rejoicing to a whole people; but England in this nineteenth century would seem to have grown too wise, or else too indifferent, to be moved by such events. A profitable invention or useful scientific discovery will still, it is true, arouse her interest, but not such a poor performance as a work of art wrought in the fire of genius by the creative artist.

Yet, if we consider it aright, what can be more ennobling to the life of a nation than to have its great deeds sung by its poets, and recorded in art by its artists? Maclise evidently felt this inspiring influence, for in these two supreme works of his art, the "Waterloo" and "Trafalgar," he has been, as it were, so carried beyond himself by the greatness of his themes, that he has set before us, with all the vividness of actual fact told in words by a consummate writer, or, I might even say, sung in verse by a noble poet, the scene he depicts.

Mr. D. G. Rossetti, writing of these paintings with eloquent enthusiasm in an article in the "Academy,"[1] before quoted, says of them that "they unite the value of almost contemporary record with that wild, legendary fire and contagious heart-pulse of hero-worship which are essential for the transmission of epic events through art. These are such 'historical' pictures as the world

[1] "Academy," April 15, 1871.

perhaps had never seen before, bold as that assertion may appear in the face of the trained and learnedly military modern art of the Continent. But here a man wrought whose instincts were absolutely towards the poetic, and yet whose ideality was not independent, but required to be exercised in the service of action, and perhaps even of national feeling, to attain its full development. These two splendid monuments of his genius thus truly directed he has left us; and we may stand before them with the confidence that only in the field of poetry and not of painting can the world match them as realized chronicles of heroic beauty."

Such is a painter's estimate of these works, whose painter England suffered to die under conditions of depression and discouragement such as only those who have devoted their energies for a long period to a great work which has failed, when finished, to meet with due recognition, can conceive.

In future ages, probably, Maclise will be remembered solely as the painter of the only great monumental paintings of which England can boast; but at present Englishmen seem for the most part utterly unaware that these exist, and when they speak of Maclise criticize him mainly from their knowledge of his minor works, and especially from a point of view derived from the study of his two pictures in the National Gallery. It is, in truth, exceedingly difficult to arrive at any true estimation of Maclise's extremely complex art, which possesses so many elements of genius, and yet so often falls below it into mere cleverness and skilful effect, sometimes even descending to clap-trap.

After these wall-paintings in the Houses of Parliament Maclise never again attempted any great monumental work. In a letter to Forster he says: "I have been almost ashamed to confess to myself that I had no other idea in carrying on this labour than the poor hope of doing something worthy, and its consequent excitement. Well, enough of this! I can only look forward, when I throw this last work off my mind ("The Death of Nelson," upon which he was then engaged), to resume my old habits,

and try whether my energies will still suffice to fill the old clothes respectably." Again, in a letter to Mr. Stephens of the "Athenæum," he writes: "Now that the excitement of my work is abating, I confess to the despondency in which my colleague found me with my face to the wall. It seems to be in a kind of expiation of those pictorial escapades I had made in my youthful days, and I sigh to perform some penitential picture work; but this I fear will not now occur." It is sad to see this gloom gathering gradually over his bright and undaunted mind. It is evident from all his letters at this time that despondency of spirit was weighing him down. Had he been cheered after his severe task was ended by proper recognition and a little warm enthusiasm, the case might have been different; but as it was, when the excitement he speaks of was over, he seems, not unnaturally, to have experienced a depressing reaction. He, who with his pleasant humour had once been the life of all the jovial meetings of former days, now shrank from society of all kinds, and was rarely seen even by his intimate friends.

Strange to say, though of a warm and loving nature, Maclise had never married, so that he had not now a stronghold to fall back upon in the love of wife and child. He had, however, clung with true affection to all his home ties, having his father and mother to live with him in London as soon as he could afford it. But both father and mother were now dead, and his eldest sister, who had continued to live with him after the younger one married, and to whom he had always been devotedly attached, was seized, about the time that he was finishing his wall-paintings, with an incurable complaint, and died, after a painful illness, in 1865. Up to this period, Maclise himself had generally enjoyed robust health, but it is supposed that the long hours and constant application in a damp atmosphere during his six years of labour in the Royal Gallery had a bad effect on his constitution, for from this time, though by no means a very old man, his health began to fail. In 1865, on the death of Sir Charles Eastlake, he was offered the presidency of the Royal Academy; for, whatever neglect he may have suffered in other quarters, it is certain

that his brother Academicians always highly appreciated his powers, and did everything in their power to show him respect. This honour, however, he declined, not feeling at this time equal to the duties that the office would have forced upon him, nor caring about its distinction. He was, as has been said, a curiously unassuming man, without the least trace of self-conceit, and though deeply hurt at the treatment he experienced from the Government, he never attempted to assert himself, or made any formal complaint. He had done a great work for his country, and had met with the usual reward. He simply "resumed his old habits," giving no thought to honours that might, and undoubtedly should, have come to him.

During the few remaining years of his life he continued his interrupted contributions to the Royal Academy, sending in 1866 two pictures, a portrait of Dr. Quain, and "Here Nelson Fell," a study in oils for his wall-painting; in 1867, two Shakespearian subjects; in 1868, "Madeline after Prayer," from "St. Agnes' Eve," and "The Sleep of Duncan," a grand and powerful work, different in treatment from his earlier scenes from "Macbeth," less theatrical and redundant; and in 1869, "King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid," the beggar maid being painted from his niece, Miss Banks, who seems to have been a favourite companion. In 1870, though his health was still failing, he nerved himself to the production of another historical painting, "The Earls of Desmond and Ormond," his last work, which many will remember to have looked at with mournful interest as it hung on the walls of the Royal Academy after the painter's death. This happened on the 25th of April, 1870, after a short attack of acute pneumonia, and he was buried at Kensal Green on the same day that the Academy dinner took place.

A painful estrangement had for some years existed between Maclise and his early and dear friend Dickens. But it is evident that this disagreement, though it put a stop to their friendly intercourse, did not sever the affection of these old friends, for on Maclise's death Dickens writes to Forster:—

"Like you at Ely, so I at Higham had the shock of first

reading at a railway station of the death of our dear old friend and companion. What the shock would be, you know too well. It has been only after great difficulty, and after hardening and steeling myself to the subject by at once thinking of it and avoiding it in a strange way, that I have been able to get any command over it and myself. If I feel at the time that I can be sure of the necessary composure, I shall make a little reference to it at the Academy to-morrow. I suppose you will be there?"

This "little reference" was made the next day at the Academy dinner, and contains such a warm tribute to Maclise's worth and genius that, although it has been often quoted, I cannot forbear repeating it here:—

"Since I first entered the public lists," said Dickens, "a very young man indeed, it has been my constant fortune to number among my dearest and nearest friends members of the Royal Academy who have been its grace and pride. They have so dropped from my side, one by one, that I already begin to feel like the Spanish Monk of whom Wilkie tells, who had grown to believe that the only realities around him were the pictures which he loved, and that all the moving life he saw, or ever had seen, was a shadow and a dream. For many years I was one of the two most intimate friends and most constant companions of the late Mr. Maclise. Of his genius in his chosen art I will venture to say nothing here; but of his prodigious fertility of mind, and wonderful wealth of intellect, I may confidently assert that they would have made him, if he had so minded, at least as great a writer as a painter. The gentlest and most modest of men, the freest as to his generous appreciation of young aspirants, and the frankest and largest-hearted as to his peers, incapable of a sordid or ignoble thought, gallantly sustaining the true dignity of his vocation without one grain of self-assertion, wholesomely natural at the last as at the first, 'in wit a man, in simplicity a child,' no artist of whatsoever denomination, I make bold to say, ever went to his rest leaving a golden memory more pure from dross, or having devoted himself with a truer chivalry to the art-goddess he served."

Maclise's style of art was not adapted for book illustra-

tion; but he executed the designs for Moore's "Irish Melodies," Bulwer Lytton's "Pilgrims of the Rhine," and several other books of his time. Also in 1857, he drew a fine series of outline designs illustrating "The Story of the Norman Conquest," published by the Art Union.

JOHN PHILLIP.

JOHN PHILLIP, who is best known to us perhaps by the distinguishing epithet of "Spanish Phillip," was a Scotchman by birth and parentage, having been born at 13, Skene Square, Aberdeen,[1] on April 19, 1817. His parents belonged to the same humble, hard-working class as those of David Roberts, and like that painter also, he began his art career as a house-painter. Unfortunately he has not left us, like Roberts, any pleasant autobiographical records. He seems indeed to have had a dislike to writing about himself, and scarcely wrote a letter unless it was absolutely necessary. It is difficult, therefore, to gain any exact information about his early life. It seems certain, however, that his taste for art was declared from childhood, and that, in the manner of so many youthful artists, he began to draw as soon as he could do anything. Phillip himself in later days was fond of relating how a drum belonging to his father, which used to hang on the wall at the foot of his bed, and that had the Royal arms painted in brilliant colours upon it, greatly attracted his youthful attention, and was probably the first object that awoke in him a desire towards painting.

His first employment seems to have been as errand-boy to a tinsmith in Hutcheon Street, and here his natural bent was seen by the delight he took in using the bright red and green paints wherewith his master coloured his pails and watering-cans. While thus employed he got acquainted with a local portrait-painter named William Mercer, who taught him some of the secrets of his art, but who was not best pleased, it is said, when he found his young pupil was likely to outstrip him. As a promotion from his employ-

[1] A small brass plate to this effect has been inserted in the outside wall of this house.

ment with the tinsmith, young Phillip was next apprenticed to a painter and glazier of the name of Spark, whose shop was situated in the picturesque but unsavoury quarter of Aberdeen known as "Wallace Nook." Here, while working perforce at window-setting and the other mechanical parts of his trade, he continued his artistic studies, and began, it is said, to paint portraits when about the age of fifteen. One of his first efforts in this line was, however, a much earlier performance. This was a portrait of Wallace that he copied from a swinging signboard that hung opposite his master's shop, and utilizing the knowledge this brought him, he also painted a signboard for a basket-maker in Queen Street, who would thus seem to have been his first patron.

About this time, however, by a lucky chance, he became acquainted with some higher examples of painting than were afforded by his study of signboards. His master, as before said, united the two occupations of painter and glazier; and early one morning he sent his apprentice, young Phillip, to put in a pane of glass in the house of Major Pryse Lockhart Gordon, with strict injunctions to have it done before that gentleman came down to breakfast. "But," writes the son of Major Gordon in a letter to the "Athenæum," "when my father came into the room he found nothing done, and snubbed the youth for his dilatoriness, who, however, excused himself satisfactorily to my father by stating that he really could not take his eyes off the pictures, of which my father had always two or three good ones. The youthful Apelles had never seen a good picture before." Major Gordon became at once interested in the glazier's apprentice, who, we will hope, put in his window satisfactorily in the end, and invited him to come again and see his pictures, and so an intimacy began that was productive of great results, for Major Gordon after a time introduced the aspiring young glazier to the notice of Lord Panmure, who generously undertook to pay for his education as a painter in London.

Before this time, however, probably soon after the window-pane incident, young Phillip had achieved a visit to the capital on his own account, of which the following

account is given by Mr. Thomas Oldham Barlow, the eminent engraver, in a short memoir of John Phillip that he prefixed to the catalogue of his works exhibited at the London International Exhibition in 1873.

"A friend of young Phillip's father," says Mr. Barlow, "had often promised him that he would some day take him to London in his brig, but whenever he reminded the old sailor of this promise, it was always the wrong time for its performance. Impatient of this hope deferred, he one day hid himself on board, and only revealed himself when the vessel was too far out to put back. The skipper at first threatened punishment with the rope's end, but relenting, set him to work to paint the figure-head of his brig. On arriving in London the poor lad was kept two whole days 'lifting ballast,' and was not permitted to leave the ship. Having at length one day's leave of absence, he was at Somerset House by six o'clock in the morning, when he found he had two hours to wait. As soon as the doors of the Academy were opened, to use his own words, 'I was the first in, and they swept me out with the sawdust in the evening.' The same night, to redeem his promise, he went back to the brig, and in her returned to Aberdeen."

This expedition was undertaken in the year 1834, when Phillip was seventeen years of age. His one day's study at the Royal Academy doubtless inspired him with fresh enthusiasm, and from this time, or perhaps before, he seems to have broken away from his employment of house-painting, and to have become half pupil, half journeyman to James Forbes, a local portrait painter, under whom he made rapid progress. As a memorial of his voyage to London there remains a painting of the brig "Manly," in which he sailed, and which he presented to his friend the skipper, David Benzie, of Aberdeen. It is now in the possession of Mr. Alexander Walker, and is interesting as being about the only marine subject he ever painted, and also as being the earliest of his pictures of which the date is known, for though eleven others are placed before it in the International Exhibition Catalogue, their dates are acknowledged to be doubtful.

Early in the following year, 1835, he made a bolder attempt, and painted a cottage interior with twelve figures. It was called "The Pedlar or Newsvendor," both subject and treatment being suggested, it would seem, by Wilkie's "Blind Fiddler," though how he had managed to gain sight of that picture is not apparent, unless perchance he had contrived to visit the National Gallery as well as the Royal Academy during his short visit to London. Probably, however, he only knew it from engravings. His own picture he got placed in a shop window, and watched the whole day afterwards from the opposite side of the street to see what effect his work produced on passers-by. It is to be feared their admiration did not yield him much satisfaction, but the picture attracted the attention of Major Gordon before mentioned, and led to a renewal of Phillip's acquaintance with that gentleman. Lord Panmure probably purchased it at this time, for he afterwards presented it, together with an important historical painting called "The Morning of Bannockburn," and two cattle pieces, also by Phillip, to the Brechin Mechanics' Institute. And Lord Panmure did not limit his encouragement to purchasing young Phillip's pictures merely. At Major Gordon's wise suggestion he determined to give him the opportunity of studying art in the London schools. "I will be," he writes to Major Gordon, "at the expense of your youth's education as an artist, and will most readily adopt any plan you may suggest for that purpose; so strike while the iron's hot; be prompt and spare no expense." A cheque for £50 was enclosed in this letter.

Phillip was at this time earning a little money by portrait painting, and also by scene painting in the Aberdeen Theatre, but he at once gave up these occupations and started for London in 1836. Here he was first placed as a pupil with Mr. J. M. Joy, but in the following year he was sufficiently advanced to enter as a student at the Royal Academy. In the Academy school he continued for two years, working diligently but without gaining any particular distinction, or attracting much notice. Nor did his early pictures draw attention, or in any way give promise of the success he was afterwards to attain. In 1839 he

exhibited his first pictures at the Royal Academy, "A Moor," and a portrait of W. Clerihew, of Aberdeen; and in 1840 he came forward with an ambitious subject picture, "Tasso in Disguise relating his Persecutions to his Sister." This failed to attract much notice, and in the same year, 1840, Phillip returned to Scotland and again took up with portrait painting. He did not remain long in Scotland, however, for in 1841 we find him back in London, living in Russell Place, Fitzroy Square, a locality much affected by artists. Here for the next few years he appears to have supported himself chiefly by portrait painting, not sending any work to the Royal Academy until 1846, when he contributed a picture of "Wallace," the hero of his youthful admiration on the signboard. This was followed in 1847 by "Presbyterian Catechizing," a Scotch minister examining the poor little children of his flock in doctrinal questions, and in 1850 by "Baptism in Scotland," a picture in which his powers as a painter first became apparent, and which at once made him known as an artist of considerable promise. This first success he followed up in 1851 by sending several other paintings of Scotch subjects, including "The Spae-wife," "A Scotch Washing," and "A Sunbeam."

It is probable that he would now have gone on painting Scotch scenes and peasant subjects in the somewhat coarse, dashing style that belonged to him, had not his health, which was constitutionally weak, shown signs of coming danger. On this account he was recommended by his doctors to try a warmer climate, and for this reason only, in the autumn of 1851, he went to pass the winter in Spain. The change effected wonders, not only for his health but also for his art. We have seen how Wilkie, nearly thirty years before, was so struck by the rich, picturesque nature of Spanish life, and the glories of Spanish art, that he deserted his old style, in which he had achieved so many triumphs, for one that he believed to be more in unison with the calm dignity of the great masters. He, a practised master, who had arrived at the height of his powers, undoubtedly made a great mistake, and by giving up his own nationality and individuality sacrificed all that

was most valuable in his art; but with John Phillip it was different; he had not yet attained to any distinctive individuality, but first saw his way to it when he beheld the glowing colours, rich beauty, and highly pictorial effects of the Spanish life into which he was now thrown. It was a new revelation to the homely Scotch painter, who had hitherto been used only to the misty atmosphere and subdued tones of his native land, and he immediately set about recording its glory on canvas.

During the winter of 1851-52, which was spent at Seville chiefly, he made a number of sketches and began several pictures, but he did not exhibit anything at the Academy in 1852, though he returned to London with what he had accomplished some time in that year. Sir Edwin Landseer was among the number of artists to whom he first showed his Spanish sketches, and he was so much struck with them that he spoke of them to the Queen, who at once expressed a wish to see them. Phillip accordingly laid them before her, and the result was that her Majesty gave him a commission for a picture illustrative of Spanish life and manners, and at the same time purchased several of his sketches.

"The Letter Writer of Seville," one of the best known of his paintings, was the picture he executed in pursuance of this royal order. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1854, and was greatly admired, although the glaring tones in which he had tried to express the glow of light and colour struck many minds as wanting in harmony, and in perception of the subtler gradations of light and shade. Before this, in 1853, he had also exhibited two Spanish subjects, namely, "Life among the Gipsies at Seville," exhibited at the Royal Academy, and "A Spanish Gipsy Mother," exhibited at the British Institution, and bought by the Queen. In 1855 he returned once more to a Scotch theme, exhibiting this year, besides a picture called "El Pasco," the portraits of two Spanish sisters, a work representing the "Collection of the Offertory in a Scotch Kirk," in which a considerable advance was noticeable over his former Scotch subjects, proving that his study in Spain had not merely enabled him to produce brilliant and effective

transcripts of picturesque scenes, but had likewise been of solid advantage to his style. Still, however, it cannot be said that his works showed any great mastery over the difficulties of light and colour, nor any delicate perception of the various moods and shades in human nature. He painted what he saw, it is true, with considerable skill, but he seems to me to have been wanting in that high artistic insight which often enables the artist to perceive truths that other men pass by unheeded. Phillip rarely saw beyond the surface of life and character. He was content with the outside of all things, their colour, brilliancy, and effective combinations, nor troubled himself with their hidden sympathies and perplexed meanings. This is what Ruskin probably felt when he wrote in his "Academy Notes" for 1855, that "Phillip has much to subdue, much to refine, before he will be able to represent not merely the piquancy, but the wayward, half-melancholy mystery of Spanish beauty."

In the winter of 1855 he again went to Spain, accompanied this time by his friend Richard Ansdell, R.A., and the two artists had a pleasant tour together, visiting all the principal cities of that land of sun and colour.

The fruits of this journey were seen in the two pictures of "Charity" and "The Prison Window," that he sent home for the Academy Exhibition of 1857. Both these works, as well as one he had exhibited in the previous year, entitled "The Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick," show a wonderful increase in dramatic power, and a far greater understanding of colour. Much of the coarseness and crudity of his early mode of painting was, in fact, now overcome, and his tones became deeper and more harmonious without losing anything of their force and brilliancy. Many of his greatest pictures, including the three above mentioned, "The Dying Contrabandista," a very fine and striking work, painted for her Majesty; "The Gipsy Water Carriers of Seville," and "The Huff," a much admired work, were painted about this time, and brought him ever-increasing fame. In 1857 he was elected an associate, and in 1859 a member of the Royal Academy, and was also made soon after a honorary member of the Royal Scottish

Academy. Royal commissions also poured in upon him, he being always a favourite painter with the Queen and Prince Consort. One of these royal commissions, received in 1858, was to paint the marriage of the Princess Royal with the Crown Prince of Germany, which took place in that year. This was one of those gorgeous ceremonial subjects that are always very trying to the genius of an artist, but Phillip succeeded much better than most have done in making a really fine picture out of the materials at his command.

In 1860 he again went to Spain for the third time, visiting Madrid, Segovia, Toledo, and Cordova, but spending the greater part of the winter at his favourite Seville. During his stay at this time, which did not exceed six months, he commenced, Mr. Barlow states, no fewer than twenty-five important pictures, many of which he carried almost to completion, besides painting "twenty smaller pictures, forty-five water-colour sketches, and innumerable pencil jottings." He also made several fine copies of pictures by Velasquez, a master whom he studied very attentively.[1]

Phillip was a painter of very rapid execution, quick in receiving impressions, and possessing a wonderful faculty for transferring them to canvas with very little apparent effort. Often, indeed, with a few vigorous strokes of the brush he contrives to convey an effect which other painters would only be likely to attain after repeated endeavour. But even if we take into account this happy facility of execution, and dashing style, it is yet astonishing how he managed to get through the amount of work he did. Any one of his bigger pictures of this winter would have been enough to have occupied most artists for the whole six months. Yet we find among the twenty-five works commenced at this time no less a one than the magnificent "Gloria," or Spanish wake, a subject requiring an immense amount of

[1] Two of these copies, namely, "Velasquez painting the Infanta" and "Alonso Cano," were bought at the artist's sale by the Royal Academy for £1,080; and another copy of Velasquez, that of the celebrated "Surrender of Breda," was purchased by the National Gallery of Scotland.

study, and which Phillip has rendered in a powerful and highly dramatic manner. "La Gloria" was first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1864,[1] where it created a great sensation. The scene it depicts is, in truth, somewhat sensational, for Phillip has here represented the strange Spanish custom which makes the death of a little child the subject of merrymaking and feasting. A gay company are here assembled, dancing in the sunlight and testifying in all ways their joy at the happy passage of an innocent soul from earth, for such, we must suppose, is the underlying meaning of the festivity, though custom has rendered it merely an excuse for eating and drinking. Only the poor mother can take no part in the general rejoicing, but sits apart, beside the corpse of her beloved one, which, although it is decked out with flowers and candles, is unregarded except by her. Her attitude of grief that cannot be quenched is very finely rendered; in truth the whole picture is full of dramatic power and clever invention, yet somehow it fails as a whole to tell its story plainly, or to make a very vivid impression. Perhaps this is because of the multitudinous details which distract us from the central idea, and prevent the real pathos of the situation from affecting us. The brilliant tone of colour also in which it is painted, and its somewhat careless execution, seem scarcely in accordance with the character of the work. One feels a want of more shade, both literally and figuratively.

In the following year, 1865, Phillip exhibited another large and brilliant painting, "The early career of Murillo." Murillo, we are told in Stirling's "Annals of Spanish Painters," was often obliged to earn his daily bread by painting a few hasty sketches at the weekly fair of Seville, held in a broad street in front of the old church of All Saints, remarkable for its picturesque semi-Moorish belfry. "This venerable market," Stirling says, "presents every Thursday an aspect which has changed but little since the days of Murillo. Fruit, vegetables, and coarse pottery, old clothes, and old iron, still cover the ground

[1] It has since then been frequently exhibited—at Liverpool in 1865, at the Scotch Academy in 1866, and at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, where it attracted great admiration.

or load the stalls, as they did two centuries ago, when the unknown youth stood among gipsies, muleteers, and mendicant friars, selling for a few reals those productions of his early pencil for which royal collectors are now ready to contend."

Such is the scene that Phillip has depicted with great skill in the rendering of character, and with a sumptuousness of colour that exceeds even his usual lavish wealth. The boy Murillo stands to the left, with some fat priests near him, who are regarding the canvas he has just painted with inquisitorial glances, to see that he has not transgressed any of the rules that Mother Church had wisely laid down for the guidance of Spanish painters. All the traffic of the market goes on around him, and the whole makes a striking combination of rich pictorial effect. It was one of the most popular pictures of the year when first exhibited at the Academy, but Mr. Palgrave, writing of it at that time, doubted whether it would be "rated quite so highly when its first charm had passed." "The interest of the picture," he says, "together with the best of its painting, lies on the left side, where the bulky priests who inspect the young artist's canvas, with Murillo's own figure, have a power and sobriety in colour, not unworthy of a scene which inevitably recalls Spanish art to one's remembrance. The interest, however, is not adequately diffused; a lusty peasant in red who pushes forward in the middle, staring like a savage, and carrying a rather coarsely painted child, being unequal to the central place in the composition. The figures behind and beyond, on the other hand, are insufficiently wrought out, although the muleteer is very dexterously placed. A group of rough earthenware, of those charming tints and forms which civilization and "block printing" seem destined to destroy, with a heap of fruit, enriches the nearer foreground. On the whole, whilst cordially admiring the work, we feel that this is rather a case in which, according to the old proverb 'accident helps art,' than an example of advancing excellence."

Accident had, in truth, always helped Phillip: but for the accident, as it seemed to be, of his failing health and

enforced winters in Spain, his art would probably have taken a different development, and that rich Spanish quarry wherein he found so much valuable material would have remained unworked. I do not mean, of course, but that he might have been an equally good artist even if he had never received this particular bias, but assuredly it was his knowledge of Spanish life and character that made him popular, and this he worked with most successful results. One more Spanish subject, "The Chat round the Brasero," appeared at the Academy in 1866. It was a work rich in humour and expression, and of great depth and force of colour—one which certainly did not show any signs of declining excellence. In the spring of this year, Phillip, instead of his usual trip to Spain, had journeyed to Italy, and had stayed some time in Rome, where he seems to have come under the powerful influence of Titian, whom few painters are able to resist. It is told of him that a friend left him once in the Pitti Palace in Florence in deep study of a portrait by Titian, and on returning an hour afterwards found him still standing on the same form, intent upon this picture. "I am trying to find out how he did it," was his answer to the inquiries his long study elicited.

His object in visiting Italy at this time appears to have been not merely to study the art of the great Italian masters, but to paint a portrait of the Pope, and also one of Garibaldi, whose chivalric character he greatly admired. He took with him letters of introduction to both these eminent men, but the disturbed state of Italy at that time obliged him to forego his purpose, the carrying out of which would have necessitated too long a stay in the country. Instead, therefore, of wasting his time at the Papal Court, or in trying to reach Garibaldi, he engaged the handsomest female model then in Rome, and in the space of two hours painted such an excellent portrait of her that he was able to sell it at once to an English visitor for the sum of two hundred guineas, thereby exactly paying the expenses of his Italian trip, as he afterwards told his earliest friend and fellow-townsman, Mr. Forbes Robertson, the well-known art critic, to whom I am indebted for the above in-

formation, as well as for some other facts mentioned in this life. Unhappily Phillip's health was in a precarious state when he went to Italy, and soon after his return he was struck with paralysis at the house of his friend Mr. Frith, R.A., from which he never recovered. He died on the 19th of February, 1867, at the age of fifty. His life had been one of much illness and domestic trouble, which he bore manfully and cheerfully, seeking relief in constant work. He had, according to the general testimony of his friends, a kind and genial disposition, and was exceedingly good-natured and generous, often making presents of his pictures. During the latter part of his life he had a house in the Highlands of Scotland, where he spent much of his time, building a studio and planning everything after his own taste. He seems to have reverted to Scotch subjects also for his art, and had projected a number of Scotch as well as Spanish scenes, which were left in his studio at the time of his death in all stages of progress. Photographs of fifty-six of these unfinished works were taken under the direction of Mr. Oldham Barlow, Phillip's executor, in order to authenticate the condition in which they were left by the artist and were exhibited at the London International Exhibition in 1873. This exhibition, which was especially devoted to the works of John Phillip and Thomas Creswick, included two hundred and twenty works by the former, and gave a very complete view of his art. Many of his paintings have also appeared at various exhibitions since, but, strange to say, none have as yet been gained for the National Collection. With the exception of those purchased by Her Majesty, they seem all to be in the hands of private individuals.

THE END

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